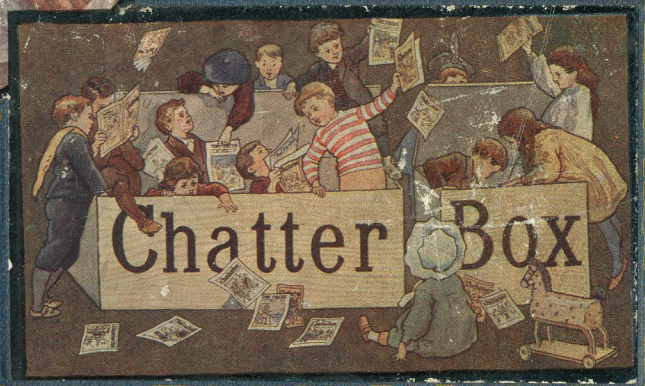
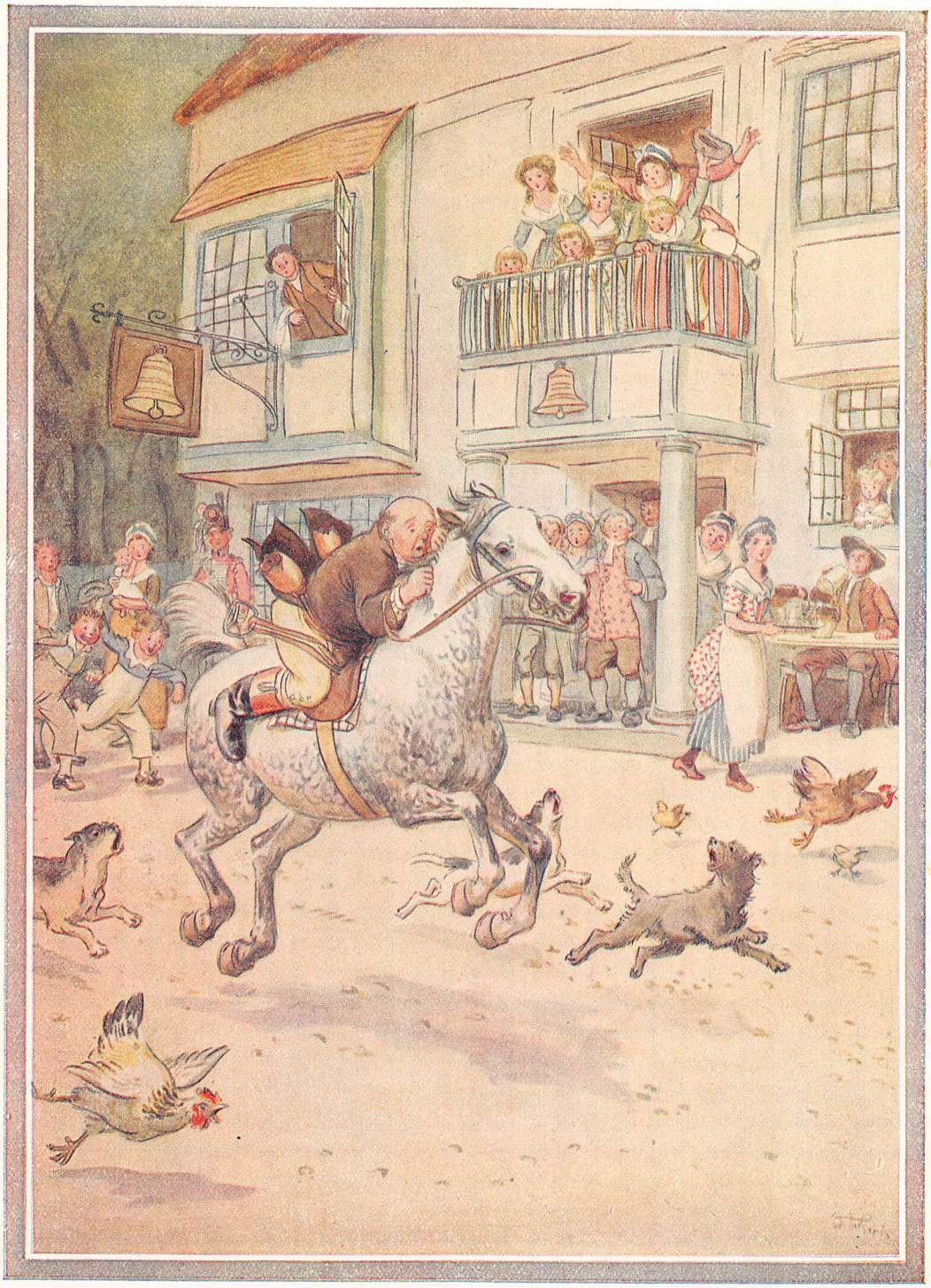
Chatterbox





CHATTERBOX.

"STOP, STOP, JOHN GILPIN!—HERE'S THE HOUSE—"

(The Diverting History of John Gilpin, by WILLIAM COWPER.)

FROM A DRAWING BY HUGH THOMSON.

Chatterbox

FOUNDED BY J. ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.

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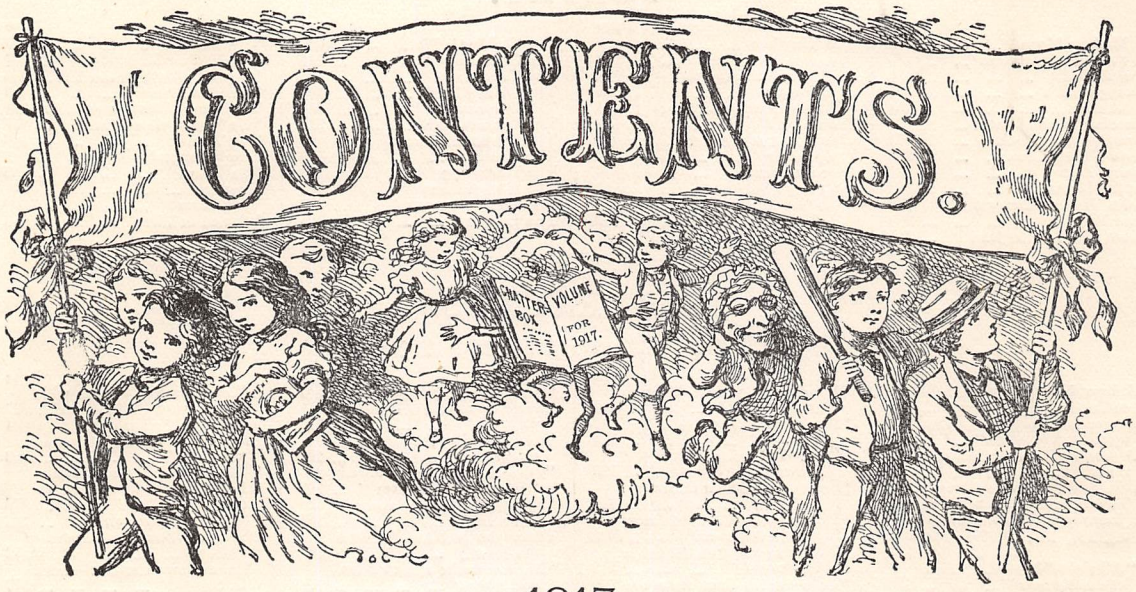

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CHATTERBOX.

"The porter handed the master a slip of paper."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

CHAPTER I.

'TAKE your hands out of your pockets, and try to pretend that you've some intelligence. Do you hear me, Harland Major, I'm speaking to you?'

It was a hot, thundery day, and the master had some excuse for being irritable. Certainly the charge of the Fourth Form at Brendon College during the summer term was not conducive to amiability.

Afternoon school had only just begun, and it looked as if every one were in for a pretty wearing time. The twenty odd boys meant to get through as little work as possible. The master knew perfectly well what they were up to, and, although he did not feel in the least energetic himself, he certainly did not intend to come out second best.

'Harland Minor, stand up and translate. Let your brother see that you're not quite so slack as he is. What, you haven't had time to prepare it? Come and speak to me later. Jackson, begin at "je le connais."'

Jackson had not prepared the lesson either, but, fortunately for him, there was an interruption in the proceedings.

A knock at the door made all the boys turn their heads, and the porter entered, carrying a slip of paper. He handed it to the master, who glanced through it, and then said aloud:

'Harland Major and Harland Minor to see the Head Master in his study. Do you hear that, you two? What have you been up to now?' Then, turning to the porter, he added: 'At five o'clock, I suppose, Smith?'

'No, sir; the Head Master said he wanted the two young gentlemen at once.'

At once! Here was a nice business. A visit to the Head after school hours generally meant a whacking. What a visit at once would mean, goodness only knew! It must be something pretty bad, that was certain.

The two brothers rose from their places and followed the porter from the room, outwardly brazen-faced, inwardly the veriest cowards. Evidently it was a serious matter, and in spite of the fact that neither of them had anything terrible on his conscience, they could not feel otherwise than extremely uncomfortable.

'What's up, Dick?' whispered the younger boy, as the door closed behind them. 'Have you done anything extra special?'

'Not that I know of,' returned his brother cautiously. 'See us to me we'll jolly soon find out, though. Come along.'

They made their way through the echoing corridor, and up the imposing staircase that led to the first floor and the Head's private room. Dick knocked timidly, and was surprised at the friendly tone in which they were commanded to 'Come in!'

The Head Master, tall and imposing, was seated at his table, and from his expression it was plain that he was much worried by the contents of a long letter which lay spread open before him. He adjusted his glasses and re-read a page of it before he spoke. Then he turned to the boys and told them they might sit down.

Sit down! In the Head's study! Had any one ever heard of such a thing before? Things must be worse, in some mysterious manner, even than the boys had expected.

'I am afraid, my boys,' began the master kindly, 'I am very much afraid that I have bad news for you... very extraordinary news, too—*most* extraordinary.'

He paused and again turned to the letter, whilst Dick, knowing that something was expected of him, whispered, 'Yes, sir,' under his breath. The younger boy sat silently perched upon the extreme edge of his chair. He was relieved in a way, but somewhat scared.

'Neither of you, I believe, have ever seen your father,' the Head went on.

'No, sir,' replied both boys together, and Dick added: 'We were sent home from India before we can remember anything.'

'That's as I thought... And—your mother is dead?' He lowered his voice, speaking very gently and kindly.

'Yes, sir, she died six years ago.' A look of perplexed fear and anxiety had crept into Dick's eyes. Suddenly he burst out into an impetuous question:

'Oh, sir, it isn't... you don't mean... it's not... Father?'

'No, no, your father is alive, my dear boy, and... I hope well. Nevertheless, this letter from your uncle and guardian, Mr. Wilcox, concerns him. It is a very strange letter... very strange.' He paused, rubbing his chin and clearing his throat nervously before continuing. 'Mr. Wilcox tells me that your father lately resigned his commission, and that, for some reason which is not apparent, he made his way to Morocco. You know where Morocco is, I expect?'

Dick did not know, and remained silent. The smaller boy held out his hand eagerly as if he were in class.

'It's in North Africa, sir!'

'Quite right. It's in the north-west corner of Africa. Well, your father appears to have travelled into the interior of the country, which is very wild and barbarous, and to have got into most serious trouble there. He has apparently, from what I can gather, been captured by some tribe of brigands, and is being held to ransom. I fear, I greatly fear, that his life is in danger.'

'How does Uncle... know?' Even to himself Dick's voice sounded very queer and shaky.

'That I cannot exactly tell you; but Mr. Wilcox says that a very large sum of money is demanded for his release. As you know, your guardian is not a rich man, and he is greatly upset by the affair. He asks me to send you both home immediately, and I very much doubt if you will be returning. I am sorry to say that he implies that he will be unable to afford to keep you at school any longer. It is a great pity, of course, but still... well, we must hope for the best. I have already told the Matron what to do; but you had better go at once and help her to put your things together, so that you will be ready to catch the six o'clock train to London.'

The boys rose to go; but before they reached the door, the Head called them back. He had risen from his seat, and stood holding out his hand, and looking kindly down at them over his eye-glasses.

'Good-bye, Dick; good-bye, Sandy,' he said. 'God bless you both, my boys. I am afraid that you have a hard time before you—harder than you imagine now. One bit of advice I can give you. Your father was... is a good man and a brave one; I knew him years ago, when

we were young men, before he went to India. If ever you are in any difficulty or in any trouble, act as you believe he would act under the circumstances, and you will not go far wrong. And whatever happens, don't be downhearted. Remember the advice Dr. Wilson gave to his comrades in the Antarctic: "Just slog on." Good-bye, good-bye.'

He wrung their hands heartily, and, as Dick and Sandy left the room, they felt, in spite of their natural excitement, as if it would take very little indeed to make them cry. (*Continued on page* 14.

'AS HAPPY AS A KING.'

YES, even kings may be happy, although Shakespeare says, 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.' But they are not happy merely because they are kings; indeed, it must be a relief and a 'holiday' for them to get away sometimes from their royal state, to lay aside, as it were, the uncomfortable crown, and to forget what great and important persons they are. It is said that the girl-queen, Victoria, upon returning from her Coronation, was glad to throw off her heavy robes, and give her dog his bath.

A prince who lived many centuries before Queen Victoria found his recreation in gardening. This was Cyrus, the younger son of Darius. One day, when he was entertaining the Lacedæmonian General, Lysander, he took his guest through the beautiful, artistically laid-out gardens. Lysander was charmed with all that he saw, to say nothing of the delicious scents which he inhaled.

'Everything here is lovely,' he said; 'but what strikes me most is the wonderful industry and exquisite taste of the man who planned these gardens. I cannot find words to express my admiration of him and of his work. Who is he?'

'It was I who drew the plan,' replied Cyrus, 'and I alone worked it out. Many of these trees were planted by my own hands.'

Lysander stared in surprise. 'What, *you?*' he exclaimed, as he surveyed Cyrus from head to foot. '*You*, whom I see before me in splendid purple robes, adorned with strings of jewels and golden bracelets, and wearing those richly embroidered buskins? Is it possible that *you* play the gardener, and plant trees with your own royal hands?'

'Why not, Lysander?' said Cyrus. 'I assure you that, when health permits, I never sit down to table before I have tired myself with exercise of some kind. It is in hard work that I find my pleasure.'

Probably Lysander had never before met a royal personage who liked work, for he seemed greatly impressed.

'You are truly happy,' he said, as he pressed the hand of Cyrus, 'and right well do you merit your high fortune.' E. D.

THE WIND AND THE ROSE.

THE Rose one summer morning whispered softly to the Wind:
'I wish to have a little chat, if you are in the mind.
Please tell me tales of lands afar—the lands you know so well,
For many things I long to hear, that only you can tell.'

The Wind was in a pleasant mood upon that sunny day,
And so he chatted for awhile in quite a friend'y way:
He told her of the Arctic North—its waste of winter snows,
Until she shivered on her stem, this dainty summer Rose.

And next, he told her of the South, in accents soft and low—
The sunny South, where tropic flow'rs in rich luxuriance grow.
He spoke of Eastern lands afar—the Islands of the West,
And then he talked about himself—a theme he loved the best!

'A wondrous thing,' said he, 'am I: across the seas I sweep,
The waves I lash to angry foam and lull them off to sleep.
Beneath my breath, the weak grow strong, they bless the Wind that blows.'
And then 'Good-bye,' he softly said, and kissed the glowing Rose.

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

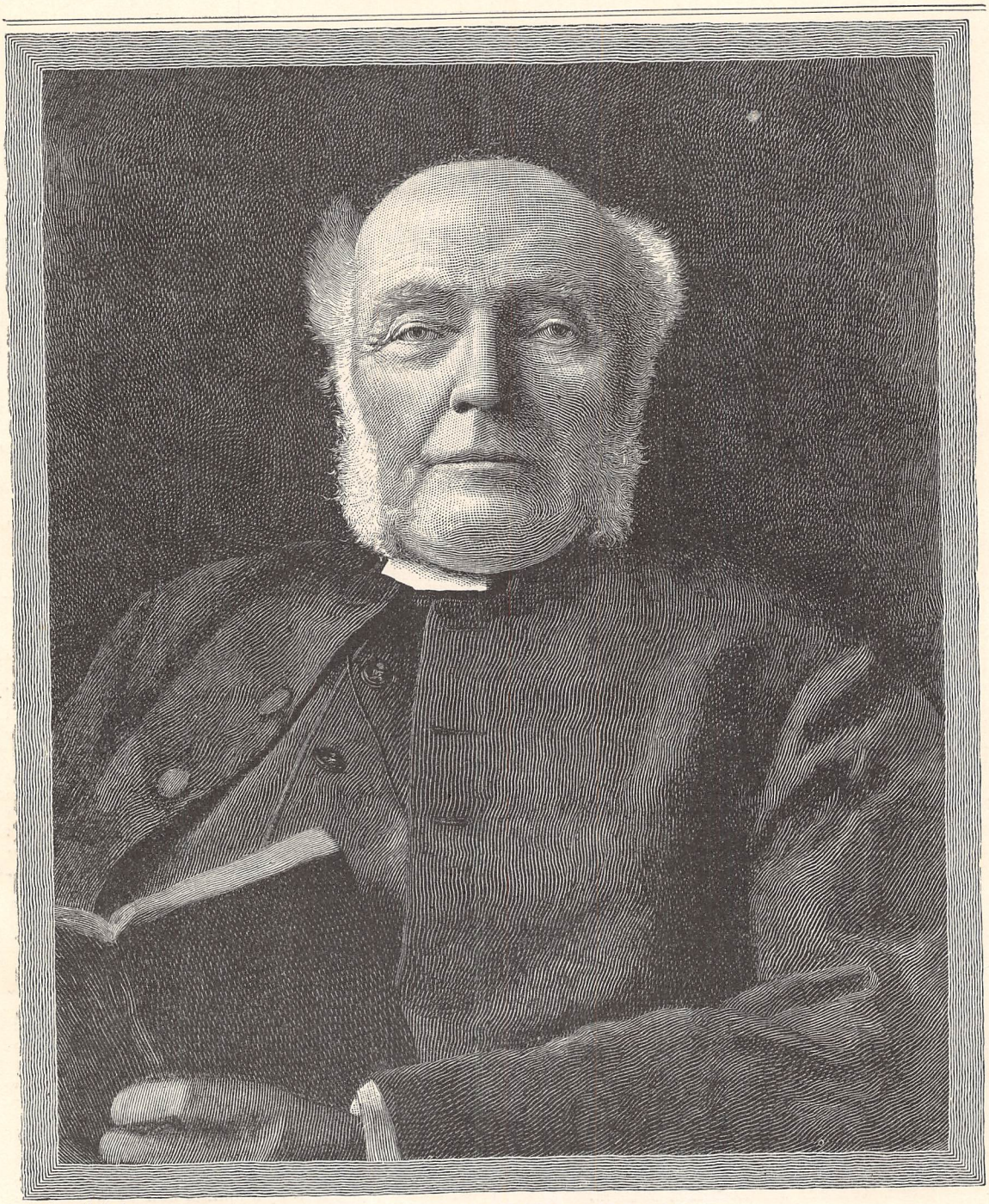
THE FIRST EDITOR OF 'CHATTERBOX.'

JOHN ERSKINE CLARKE is a name which should be dear to millions of British boys and girls, for it was the bearer of that name who founded, and for many years edited, the magazine called *Chatterbox*.

Mr. (afterwards Canon) Clarke was a clergyman in Derby when he started the magazine destined to become such a general favourite. It grieved him to see the lads and lasses devouring the poisonous stuff which he calls 'blood-and-thunder stories,' and he thought that he would try to provide them with more wholesome fare. While he was thinking about this, the word 'Chatterbox,' he says, arose, as it were, before his mind's eye, and he said to himself, 'What a splendid title for my new magazine! It would look well in type, because the letters go up and down so nicely.'

So Mr. Clarke wrote to a skilled wood engraver, a Mr. Johnston, and with his valuable help brought out a most attractively illustrated magazine, which was published in London, its publisher for a year being Mr. William Macintosh. In 1867 it was transferred to the present publishers, who have issued it ever since. It has been printed throughout by the same printer, and until a very short time ago authors, artists, and engravers were still working for it who shared in the first of its volumes. It has never lost its original distinctive character. It belonged to the 'great' period of English magazines—the 'sixties'—when many a journal now of world-wide fame came into being.

The first halfpenny number appeared on December 1st, 1866. Canon Erskine Clarke well remembers the keen pleasure it gave him to see his *Chatterbox* displayed in the shop windows, or in the hands of the young people. This is what, among other things, the Editor said in his first number: 'A *Chatterbox* with a paper-white face



J. Russell & Son.

THE REV. JOHN ERSKINE CLARKE, M.A.,
Hon. Canon of Southwark; Founder and First Editor of "Chatterbox."

and inky lips can never be tiresome, for it will not speak to anybody who leaves it alone. And though you cannot always "put down" a living Chatterbox, you can always "put down" a paper one; indeed, it will not complain if you even put it on the fire, though it hopes to deserve a welcome not quite so warm as that.'

Canon Erskine Clarke is a great child-lover; in fact, he has never left off being a child himself. When, in 1872, he left Derby for London, he opened in his parish

THE FIRST PAGE OF THE FIRST NUMBER OF "CHATTERBOX."
Published December 1, 1866.

of Battersea a school for girls. This was called 'The Vicarage School,' because it was first installed at the old Vicarage-house, near the river. Afterwards it was moved up to Clapham Common. It was fortunate not only in its founder, but also in the lady who was its first and only Principal. She, too, came from Derby. The earliest scholars at this happy school (which, generally regretted, passed out of existence a few years ago) have, of course, long since 'grown up.' Countless are the anecdotes related by these ex-pupils of the Canon's humour and

geniality. His riddles were one of the many joys of that highly-favoured school. His jokes are still remembered and repeated. A married lady, now residing at Birmingham, tells how, when she was a girl, with her hair in a 'pig-tail' down her back, she was one day walking along Battersea Rise, and felt something laid upon her shoulders; looking round, she saw Canon Clarke leaning out of a four-wheeler cab, and prodding her with his umbrella.

Much good work of other kinds has the creator of *Chatterbox* done, which we cannot touch upon here. One who knew him well said that his mere presence brought sunshine into a dark place. The writer of this brief sketch, in the days of her youth, all but adored him. How proud and happy she felt one Sunday when he greeted her with 'Good morning, *dear!*'

All Canon Erskine Clarke's numerous friends are very glad and thankful to have had him with them so long. It is a matter of happiness to them all that he is still able to welcome them.

We reproduce herewith the first page of the first number of *Chatterbox*. The magazine goes on its way through the reigns of Kings and Queens, through wars and rumours of war, through changes of fashion and changes of fact. It has had but two Editors in its long life—Canon Clarke and his successor; but it renews its youth each year, even while those who formerly read it now give it to their own children and even grandchildren to read. It has had babies of a few months old and grandfathers of eighty as its 'public'; it has gone into every quarter of the world: the terrible Postal Censor of the Great War of 1914 has passed its letters as harmless, while some of its readers have been chased by enemy submarines—boats that were never dreamt of when first *Chatterbox* appeared. So it goes on from year to year, from generation to generation, perhaps even from century to century—the old friend who is always new and always welcome.

THE WORM.

THE worms are very long and thin,
Their figures like a rolling-pin;
They eat the rubbish out of sight
When we are in our beds at night.
But when *they* seek an earthy bed,
The moles devour them instead.

I'm very glad 'twas not to be
Nature should make a worm of me,
For moles in bed and birds by day
Would take all peace of mind away;
And how could breakfast prove a boon
Knowing I might be lunch by noon?

In spite of neither tooth nor hand,
Worms close their doors with leaves and sand;
In spite of neither ear nor eye,
They seem to know when we pass by;
And, having neither legs nor feet,
How rapidly they make retreat!

They're full of secret thoughts and toil—
What do they do beneath the soil?
If moles and birds were swept away
I'd be a worm for one short day—
I'd be a worm and so find out
The sort of things they think about!

W. M. E. F.

THE USE OF THE MIRROR.

A CERTAIN wise gentleman had two children, a son and a daughter. The girl was considered very plain of face, but the boy was a handsome fellow. One day, while playing together, these two saw the reflection of their faces in a looking-glass which hung on the wall. The boy was so struck by his own beauty that he remarked upon it to his sister, contrasting it, as she thought, with her plainness.

When the father came into the room, the girl complained to him of her brother's vanity and rudeness. Then the father, taking both children on his knees, told them how they might make a really excellent use of the looking-glass.

'I would have both of you look in the glass every day of your lives,' he said; 'you, my dear son, that you may be reminded never to dishonour the beauty of your features by the ugliness of your actions; and you, my dear daughter, that you may learn to make up for any lack of face-beauty by the beauty of your character. If you are always good and kind, you will be beautiful to the eyes of all who love you. Remember, both of you, that "Handsome is as handsome does."' E D.

'DAWSON'S PANTHER.'

By Harold Bindloss,
Author of 'Jimmy Carteret,' &c.

THE sun was hot in the British Columbian clearing, and Tom Dawson, who wore a grey shirt and torn overall trousers, leaned on the shaft of his axe. His arms ached and his hands hurt, for he was learning to chop, and the long-hafted Canadian axe was heavy for a beginner.

The Winthrop ranch, built of logs and roofed with cedar shingles, stood at one end of the clearing, with a belt of yellow oats in front. Then there was an oblong of dark-green potatoes; another oblong of grass, dotted with six-foot fir stumps, where the timothy hay had been cut; and a belt of felled trees, waiting to be burned and called the *slashing*. Behind, giant forests rolled back unbroken to the north of Vancouver Island. Beginning at the forest and working backwards, the process of clearing a ranch in the wilderness lay before him.

Tom had lately come out from England and liked the country, although there was more hard work and less adventure than he had expected. His cousin, Jake Winthrop, was now giving him a lecture, and Mush, the black and white terrier, sat on their coats, snapping at the flies. Jake, who was about sixteen and wore very few clothes, had a thin, brown face and the body of a Greek athlete.

'We've no use for a man in Canada unless he can chop, so if you're going to be a rancher, you've got to learn,' he said. 'When you want to build anything, from a house to a bridge, you just take your axe and cut the material in the bush. But you mustn't drive the axe, as you were doing; you find her balance and then swing with her and let her make *you* go. Comes natural like swimming or playing the fiddle.'

'Playing the fiddle doesn't come natural,' Tom objected. 'I've tried and I know.'

'Well, perhaps not at first,' Jake agreed. 'But before you can do a hard thing well, you must stay with it

until you forget *how* you are doing it. Anyway, you want to forget the axe and keep your eye on the notch. Now you watch me!'

The bright blade circled round his head, and Tom noted the grace and precision with which arms and body followed its movements. There was a *chunk* as the steel bit deep into the side of a tall fir; the axe flashed back and came down at a different angle, and a white chip sprang out. Another followed, and then they seemed to fly up in a steady shower, through which the gleaming steel swept to and fro.

Tom tried again and jarred his arms as the blade struck slantwise, after which it went too deep and he could hardly pull it out; but the thing had a fascination, and he stuck to the work until he was breathless and bathed in perspiration. When at last the fir toppled and went down with an echoing crash, his back was very sore and his hands bled. But he had made some progress; he was learning the swing.

In the afternoon, they started for the settlement with the *jumper*, sitting on the sledge which two red oxen hauled over a rough trail through the bush. As they went, Jake talked about the wild beasts, and told Tom how the grey timber wolves hunted the deer in packs, working them out of the valleys, with flankers to prevent their breaking back, and driving them into a ravine from which there was no escape.

'A deer's most as fast as a locomotive, and will jump anything in its way; it can run a wolf out of sight,' he said. 'Up north, the big bull moose dig snowpits when the pack gets after them. The pit's something like a basin, and the moose stands inside and sweeps the top edge with his horns. Then there are panthers; it's strange you haven't seen one yet.'

'Don't panthers live in the tropics?'

'We've got some here all right. Don't know if they're the same kind, but I guess they're fierce. Take our hogs and dogs; you watch Mush.'

He made a low, snarling noise, and the terrier, which was sitting on the sledge, growled. Then it crept up to him, as if for protection, and licked his hand.

'Mush knows!' he resumed and called to the oxen: 'Hustle, Buck; get a move on, Bright.'

An hour later the boys sat on the veranda of a log grocery, talking to some ranchers who had come in for their mail. Dark forest surrounded the tiny settlement, but there was a clearing about the store, and then the trail ran like a tunnel beneath the gigantic trees. A few lean pigs, of the kind the Canadian calls razor-backs, were rooting in the hot dust. It was cool on the shaded veranda, and the sound of a hidden river throbbed across the resinous-scented bush. There was no wind, and except for the low, drawling voices, everything was still.

Suddenly a lithe grey object leaped from the shadow, a hundred yards off. It had something of a cat's shape, and its movements were incredibly swift. Tom thought it rather flashed than sprang through the sunshine; but almost as he first saw it, there was a squeal from a pig and a cloud of dust rolled up. Then the pig appeared out of the dust and slid and tumbled across the trail, with another wonderfully active creature half dragging, half carrying it. Next moment there was a crash in the brushwood, and both had gone. It had all happened in a very few seconds, before the men had time to move.

One ran down the steps with a rifle, another with an axe, while Mush stood at the top with bristling hair. By-and-by the men came back, having found nothing; but Tom knew he had seen his first panther. He was afterwards to see another, at much closer quarters.

The boys started home while the settlers tried to pick up the panther's trail, and for the next few weeks Tom practised steadily with the axe. Then, when the oats were in the barn and he had helped to burn the slashing, and build a zigzag fence with split rails that were fastened together without the use of nails, Jake and he set off for a day's shooting. They meant to leave Mush behind, but as they climbed the fence he came up and stood looking at them appealingly while he wagged his stumpy tail.

'If we took him, he'd go hunting in his own way and scare off the deer,' Jake remarked in a doubtful tone. 'You can't come this time!'

The little dog lowered his ears, and creeping up to Tom pawed the leg of his overalls. Tom looked at his comrade, who hesitated and then made a sign.

'Well, I reckon we've got to take him, but we're surely foolish to give in to a dog. Mush, you can come along.'

The terrier leaped into the bush and vanished with explosive barks, and Jake frowned.

'First thing about hunting is quietness, but we'll find no deer for a while and maybe he will quit yapping when he's tired.'

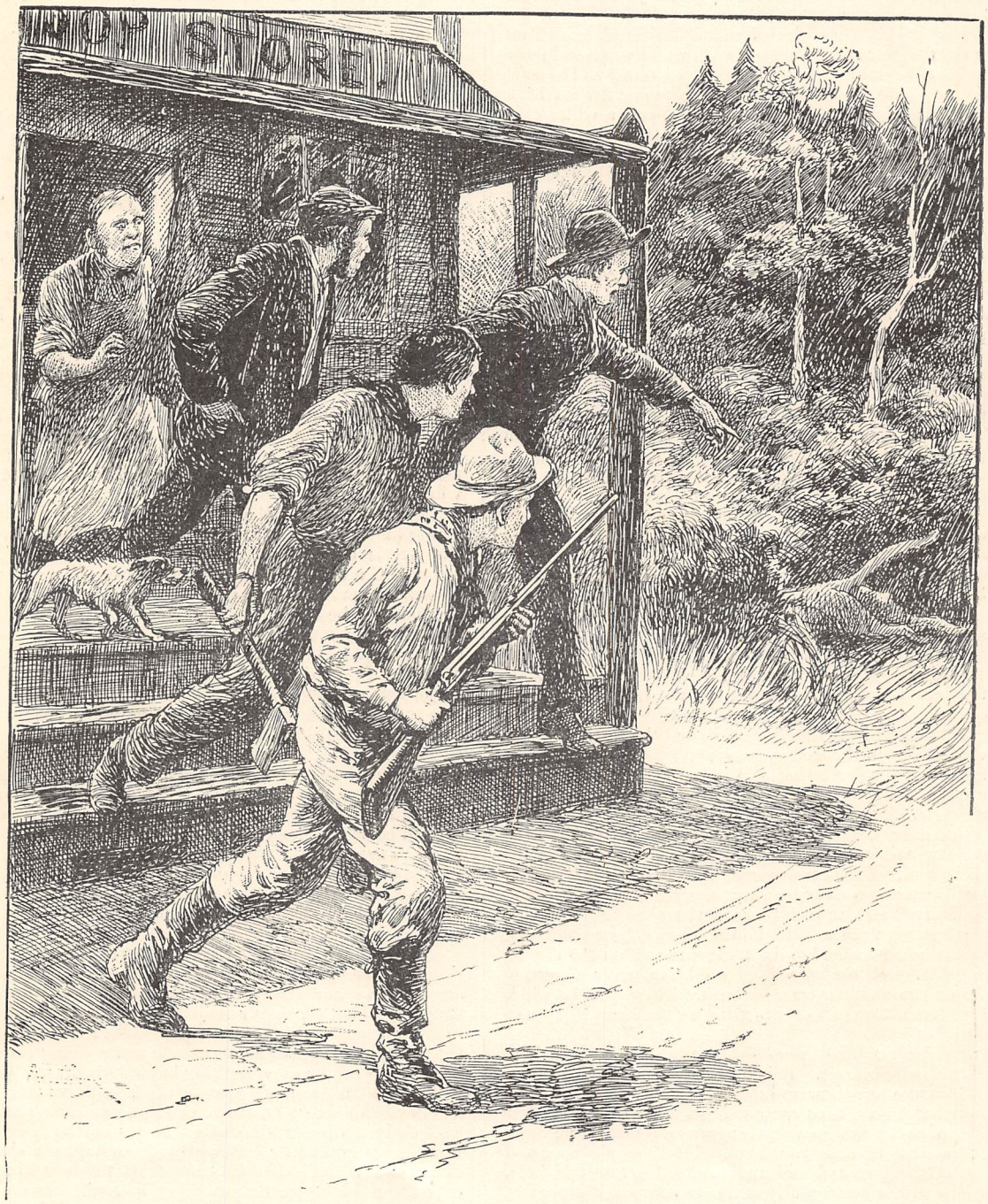
They plunged into the bush, which was part of the great pine forest that runs right round the world between the Arctic barrens and the plains where cultivation begins. On the Pacific slope of Canada it reaches a tremendous growth, and so far the lumberman's axe had not touched the belt about the Winthrop ranch. Giant firs, cedars, and balsams shot up two hundred feet, and the high space beneath their first branches was filled with soft green shade. Here and there puzzling lights shone between the big grey trunks, and mighty fallen logs and dense thickets barred the boys' way. In clearer spots, rocks broke through the undergrowth; wild cabbage, on which the black bear feeds, filled the wet muskegs, and there were brakes of tall fern. In bush of this kind, six or seven miles is a good day's journey.

Tom carried a long, sharp axe, which he had now learned to use; Jake had a single-shot rifle that he had bought second-hand. He said she was a good gun when you got used to her; but sometimes the extractor jammed, and you had to pull the burned cartridge out. When this happened, it was a minute or two before one could reload.

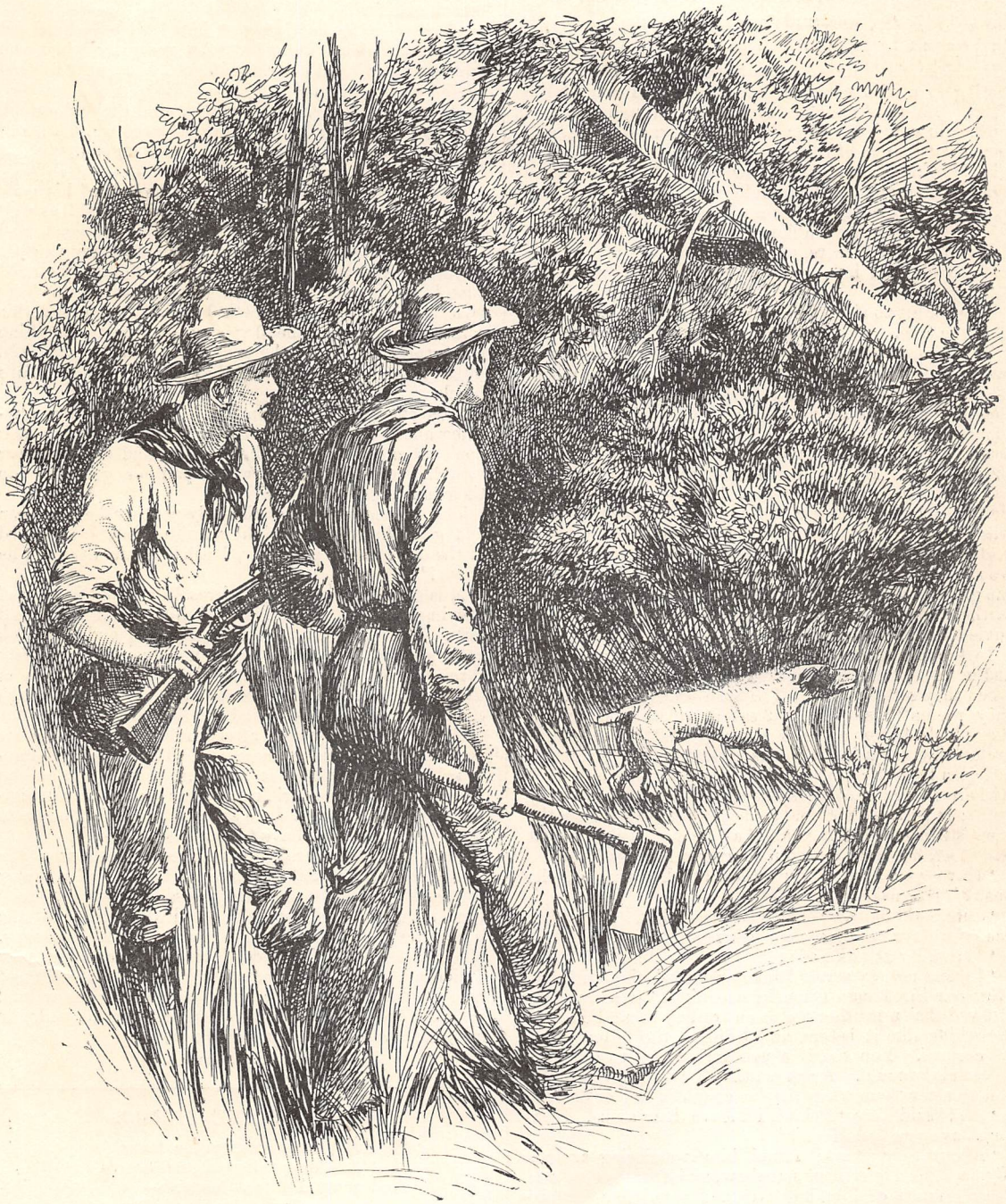
Now and then Tom was forced to cut a path; at other times they scrambled along big trunks that had fallen across each other. Their butts, or lower ends, were on the ground, but the tops ran slanting into the air, while rotten branches and matted brush filled the gaps between. On the whole, he had no opportunity of looking about, and when he did so saw nothing but stately trees. One must learn to use one's eyes in thick bush, where the colour of the forest creatures matches the background, and their outline is broken by leaves and twigs. A branch that crosses its body will hide an animal a short distance off. Indeed, Jake once tried to show him a deer about eighty yards away, but he could not see it until the animal, startled by a movement, set off through the forest in graceful bounds.

'I wanted you to get a shot, but I'll take the next,' Jake remarked.

(*Continued on page* 10.)



"One ran down the steps with a rifle, another with an axe."



"Mush was standing about a dozen yards off, his small body stiffened."

'DAWSON'S PANTHER.'

By Harold Bindloss, Author of 'Jimmy Carteret,' &c.

(*Continued from page* 7.)

THEY heard another deer brushing the tops of the thickets it jumped in its flight; and a black bear rooting in a wild cabbage patch, but could not see the latter. As they crawled cautiously through the wet muskeg in which the animal fed, there was a crash, and then a succession of snapping sounds that gradually got faint, for the small black bear when frightened goes straight through everything in his way. By-and-by Mush put up a willow grouse that ran for a long time through the brush, and at length flew to a branch. It seemed to think it was safe there, as a willow grouse often does, and stopping on its perch, let them come to within a dozen yards.

'You want to shoot its head off,' said Jake, who gave Tom the rifle.

The reason was obvious, because a willow grouse is small and a rifle bullet makes a hole, particularly where it comes out. Tom took a deep breath, and tried to steady himself as he put the weapon to his shoulder. The range was short, but the bird would not keep its head still, and it is easy to miss a small mark with a single bullet. He could get the foresight on the bird, but could not keep it there, because as his finger tightened on the trigger the muzzle wobbled. There was a flash, and a jar on his shoulder before he quite expected it, and he heard the bullet whirr through the woods, but no report. It was plain that he had not hit the grouse, which chirped in protest and moved a little farther along the branch. He tried again and missed, and envied Jake, who beheaded the bird with his first shot.

In the meantime, Mush, who vanished now and then, had not given them much trouble, and followed quietly when they set off again. The bush was very thick, and they presently stopped and sat down on a log while they looked for an easier way. Matted raspberry brakes shut them in on one hand, and in front a number of fallen trees lay crossed like a gigantic grid, only that withering fern choked the gaps. It was hot and very quiet; indeed, Tom found something oppressive in the deep stillness. Mush panted as he lay curled up at their feet, but now and then sharply raised his head.

'Have you seen any panther in this part of the bush?' Tom asked.

'Sure,' said Jake. 'Two have been shot. A rancher has no use for panther when he's raising hogs.'

'Will they attack a man?'

'I guess not, as a rule,' Jake answered, thoughtfully. 'But our hired man came in one night, sweating, and allowed that a panther had been trailing him. I'd heard something like it before, and believed the fellow; but it's curious. You see, if a panther wanted to get you, he certainly could. Anyhow, they'll attack all right if you go after them when they've caught a hog or deer.'

'Ah!' said Tom, 'I think I'd leave them alone. How long have you had Mush?'

'About four years; found him wandering around N'ymo. He'd got lost somehow, and froze on to me. Wasn't much of him but skin and bone then, but he filled out when I took him home, and I have a notion the creature's grateful. Anyhow, he's a dog you sure get fond of.'

Mush looked up and beat his stumpy tail among the leaves. Tom bent, and stroked his head, and Mush licked his hand. He was fond of dogs, and the terrier had soon made friends with him. Then Jake opened the breach of his rifle.

'She's a good-shooting gun, but I wish I could get that ejector fixed,' he said. 'It's generally when you want to put a fresh cartridge in good and quick the old shell won't come out'

By-and-by Tom heard a rustle, and glanced round. Mush was standing about a dozen yards off, his small body stiffened, and the hair of his neck on end.

'Look at the dog!' he said.

Mush showed he heard him by a twitch of his ears, but stood still, and Tom imagined he was afraid, as well as angry. A few moments later he whimpered, and began to move backwards from the raspberry thicket, towards which he kept his face. Then he slowly circled round the log on which the boys sat, with his ears twitching and his white teeth bared. Tom found this somewhat trying. The dog saw or smelt something that was hidden from them, and was now badly afraid. What made it worse was that he knew the little animal's pluck.

'It's curious!' Jake remarked. 'If there was anything about that he could tackle, he'd get after it. You don't often see a wolf in the daytime, and a black bear wouldn't come near us, while panther generally do their hunting in the dark.'

Tom remembered that the only panther he had seen had gone hunting in bright sunshine, but Jake called to the dog: 'Quit growling, Mush! Come here and lie down!'

Mush looked round at him irresolutely, but instead of obeying, growled and vanished behind a clump of tall fern. Next moment the fern was parted and fell back as something the boys could not see broke swiftly through. The dog shrieked, there was a sharp rustle in the raspberry brake, and then a daunting silence, though the tops of the bushes behind the thicket waved.

So far as Tom could afterwards remember, he sat perfectly still for some moments. The thing had happened so suddenly that it left him bewildered, and to some extent horror-stricken. Then as he pulled himself together he heard Jake say: 'Come on! The brute has got the dog; we have to see this through.'

Tom was too dazed to recollect which way the panther went, but Jake seemed to know, and a smear of blood on some leaves they passed showed that he was right. Somehow this steadied Tom, and the horror he had felt vanished and gave place to rage. Mush had licked his hand a few minutes ago, and now was dead, or in imminent danger. The risk he must take no longer counted; he meant to save the animal he had fondled, or kill the panther. As his comrade said, they were going to see it through.

(*Concluded on page* 19.)

THE PLANE-TREES.

THE plane-trees by the river
Are dappled gold and brown
And spotted like a leopard—
You'll see when you're in town.

The plane-trees by the river
Are dappled brown and gold,
With little bobbins hanging
Tight on till they're quite old.

And the bobbins and the branches
Against a wintry sky,
With bits of leaf left hanging,
Will charm you by-and-by.

In London by the river
I love to walk along,
And watch the gulls a-hovering,
And hear the river's song.

M. E. Hornden.

INSTEAD OF PAPER.

HAVE you ever wondered how people managed to write, in the days before paper and ink had been invented? The most likely thing to suppose, perhaps, is that they didn't write at all; but, unfortunately, that answer is not the right one. They did write, and managed to do it remarkably well, too.

In all civilised countries nowadays the chief material used for writing purposes is paper. But before paper became so widely known, all kinds of other things were experimented with.

The very first, of course, was stone. Before they discovered how to work with metals, our early ancestors scratched upon the flat surfaces of rocks and stones with pieces of flint and sharp shells. And even after they discovered iron, and how to make proper tools, stone-chiselling was for a long time the only way in which they could write. If you have ever tried to carve your own initials in a stone wall, you will realise what hard work it was, and how patient they must have been.

One of the things which these early stone-workers discovered was that it is far easier to cut straight lines in stone than curved lines. And that is the reason why more than half the capital letters in our alphabet are made of perfectly straight lines.

About 300 B.C.—perhaps much earlier—the Chinese, who always thought of things before anybody else, invented a kind of paper. They made it by pounding wood fibres and strips of mulberry-tree bark into a pulp, and then rolling the mixture out flat and allowing it to dry. Powdered rice starch was generally added, in order to produce a smooth surface. For ink, they used a mixture of gum and soot. It could not have been pleasant to write with, but it was *very* lasting. The Chinese, however, kept these ideas to themselves, and for a long time the rest of the world had to manage as well as it could without any paper at all.

Stone had long since been found hopelessly difficult to work with. In the great kingdoms of Assyria and Babylonia, the substance chiefly used as a writing material was clay. Whilst it was still soft and could be moulded, it was fashioned into tablets or cylinders, and words were cut into it with a sharp-pointed instrument. Afterwards these tablets were baked hard into bricks, and in that way the writing was preserved for all time.

The Ancient Egyptians employed a different method, which was not very unlike that of the Chinese. They wrote with ink upon what is called 'papyrus.' This substance was obtained from a kind of reed which grew abundantly upon the banks of the Nile. The soft pith inside the reed was taken out and cut into strips, which were laid in a row. A second row was then laid crosswise over the first, and the whole beaten into a smooth little mat. The mats themselves were joined together so as to form rolls, which were often a great length. The longest yet found measured one hundred and forty-four feet!

The skins of animals—principally sheep, goats, and calves—have been used as writing materials at various periods, at first in Greece and Rome, and later in Europe. The finer kinds were made into vellum, which had a delicious, creamy, satiny appearance, and was very expensive indeed. The coarser sorts were made into parchment. Even now, both vellum and parchment are used occasionally for special purposes. They are still decidedly expensive, and only very courageous people dare trust themselves to write upon them. I am quite sure that *I* could never summon up courage to write upon vellum, if some kind person gave me a roll.

In addition to these specially prepared skins, the Romans sometimes wrote upon wax. For this purpose they had what is known as a 'diptych,' a word you have not heard before, and which you will speedily forget. However, if I tell you, you will be able to remember what a diptych looked like, even if you can't remember what it is called. It consisted of two small wooden boards, fastened together with little metal rings, which served as hinges. Each board was slightly hollow, and the hollow parts were filled with wax. Any writing that had to be done was scratched in the wax with a sharp piece of iron called a 'stylus.' And when something fresh had to be written, the old writing was smoothed out by rubbing the wax with the flat end of the stylus.

During the eighth century after Christ the Arabs went to war with the Chinese, and some of the prisoners whom they captured taught them how to make paper. That was really the death-blow to all the other old writing materials. From the Arabs the knowledge of paper-making spread rapidly all over Europe; after the tenth century practically nothing else was used for ordinary purposes.

The history of writing materials now becomes simply a question of the different sorts of paper that have been manufactured during the past nine hundred years, and the various improvements that have been made. So at that point I think we may take leave of the subject.

EYES THAT SEE:

THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.

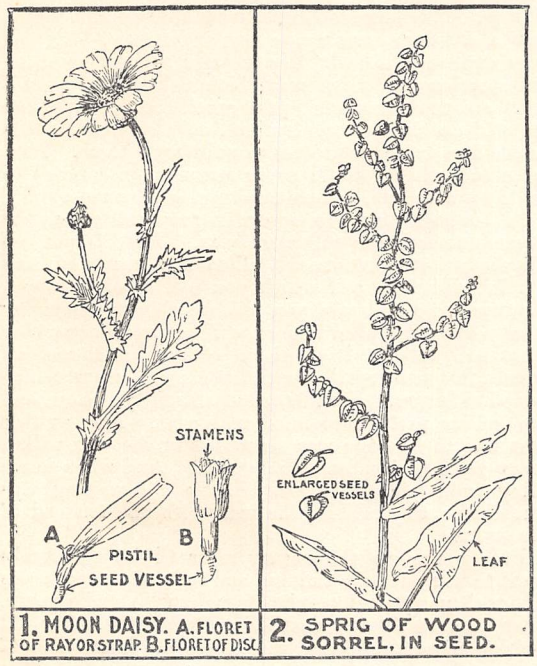
By E. M. Barlow,

Author of 'Flowers of the Nations,' 'The Breakfast Table,' &c., &c.

I.—THE FLOWERS OF A HAYFIELD.

FOR weeks I have been meaning to go into a hayfield down in the glen, and just sit on a stile at the edge of the field, and tell you of all the flowers I see there. This morning, when I looked from my window, behold! the mowing machine has started to cut down the hay on the further side of the field, and so I know I must do it *now*, or await another season. It is a brilliant morning in June, and as I sit perched on this stile my hayfield looks very lovely; every now and again the soft southern breeze sweeps over it in 'waves of shadow,' and I cannot but regret that in an hour or two it will be no more. I stood looking at it also a few weeks ago, thinking how bright and pretty it was, and unconsciously I began to count the different flowers

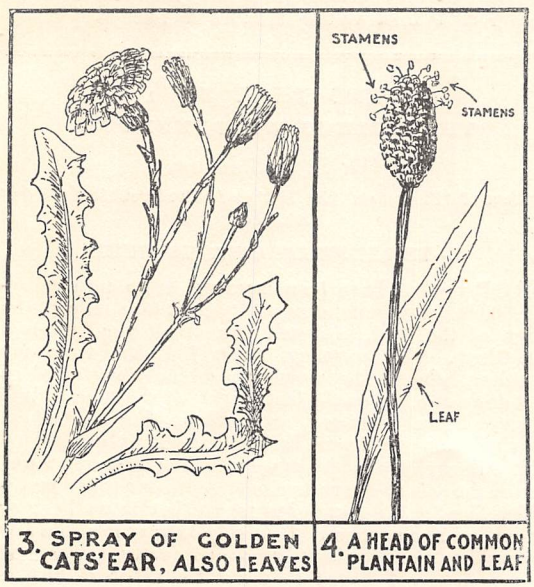
among the grass. Then, having reached a number far higher than I dreamed were there, I thought I would like to make a record of these jolly little neighbours. I was looking about for more, when suddenly I



1. MOON DAISY. A. FLORET OF RAY OR STRAP. B. FLORET OF DISC. 2. SPRIG OF WOOD SORREL, IN SEED.

realised I had left out ever so many, for I had quite forgotten the flowers of the *grasses!*

This settled the writing of this series, for it struck me that many people—even 'grown-ups'—would not believe the crowd of flowers to be found in a hayfield,

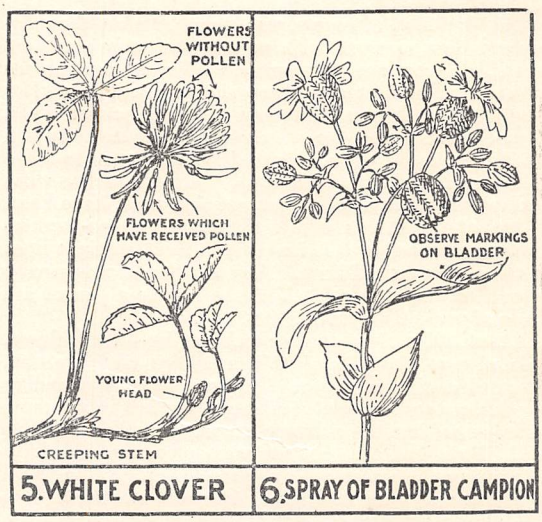


3. SPRAY OF GOLDEN CATS'EAR, ALSO LEAVES 4. A HEAD OF COMMON PLANTAIN AND LEAF

if they were not pointed out to them. They are overlooked: our eyes take the look of a hayfield for granted unless there is something unusual in it. *We do not see.* So I want to tell you a little more about everyday things that are wonderful when we really see them.

From my perch I will just try to describe to you what I see in the hayfield. The general colour is hard to describe: it is a sort of reddy-browny-green! The most striking flowers in my field are the beautiful Moon Daisies—very large and purely white. Of course, you know that these are not each just single flowers, but hundreds (fig. 1). Each of those white 'straps' (A) is a flower, and the centre is composed of hundreds of yellow tubular flowers (B). So a daisy is a 'colony!'

The next most noticeable features are the tall stems of Sorrel (fig. 2), many of them brilliantly red in colour; *all* standing well above most of their neighbours. Another easily-spotted member is a Golden Cat's-ear (fig. 3). There are so many of this family almost exactly alike that they are hard to detect: very likely there are several varieties in this one field.



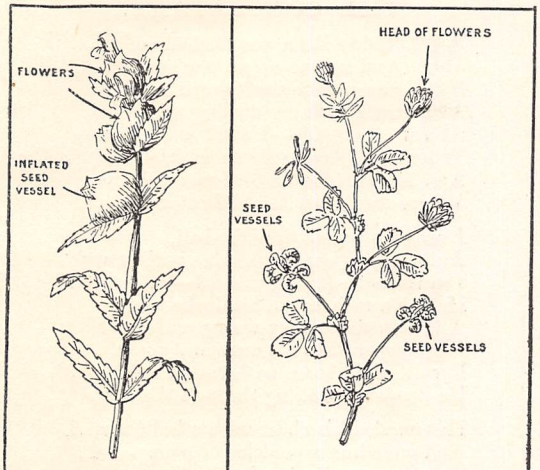
5. WHITE CLOVER 6. SPRAY OF BLADDER CAMPION

I next note little dark knobs waving about among the grass, and I know they are Plantain—'soldiers,' or 'cocks,' the children call them, when they have battles with them, each trying to hit off the head of the other's 'soldier,' the one with the toughest stem winning (fig. 4). Here, again, you really have a mass of flowers all gathered together on one head; you can see the stamens hanging out of the upper flowers in fig. 4. The stems on which these heads are carried are five-sided, and its leaves are long and narrow, which gives it the Latin name, *Plantago lanceolata* (like a 'lance.')

Pink and white Clover, too, are there poking out from among the grass, and adding to the beauty of the field and the scent in the air. The clovers, of course, are really pea-shaped flowers, and they belong to the Pea family. There is one little fact about clover which always interests me. When the flowers first open they stand up straight, but as soon as an insect has 'called,' and deposited pollen on the clover's pistil, the flower hangs down. It is like a signal; thus, when the flower stands up it seems to say, 'I am ready to receive

callers'—'At home,' in fact; but when the signal is down it means, 'Thank you, I am satisfied; I require no further callers!' Fig. 5 shows you my meaning plainly, I think.

There is a patch of white flowers a little way in the field. I must go to the place and find out what it is; and, also, I must look out the smaller flowers in the hay, which I cannot see from here. Yes, that white patch was Bladder Campion. Do you know it? It is like the Billy Button we have in our hedges, only the corolla (the collection of flower petals) is smaller,



7. SPRAY OF YELLOW RATTLE — 8. SPRAY OF MEDICK.

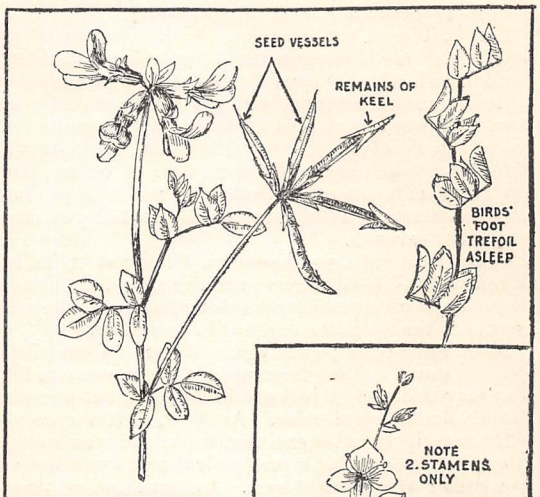
and the calyx (the case from which they spring) is larger—much blown out, in fact—which gives it its name. This bladder or calyx is beautifully marked with madder tracing, and well worth examining (fig. 6).

This field in which I am is a Welsh hayfield, and therefore there is much Yellow Rattle among the hay. You do not know this flower? Well, I will show it to you, because you are sure to meet it sooner or later: in Wales it always gets in among the hay. Here is a sketch in fig. 7. The flowers are yellow, and not very large, but the calyx is large, and, after the corolla has fallen, the calyx gets larger (see figure); by the time the hay is gathered in this calyx is dry, and the seeds rattle inside as the wind moves the stems about—hence its name. In a high wind they make quite a noise.

Medick was one of the tiny flowers I found when I made my excursion just now. This is a tiny little fellow that creeps about, and carries heads of minute yellow flowers, very like clover in form (fig. 8).

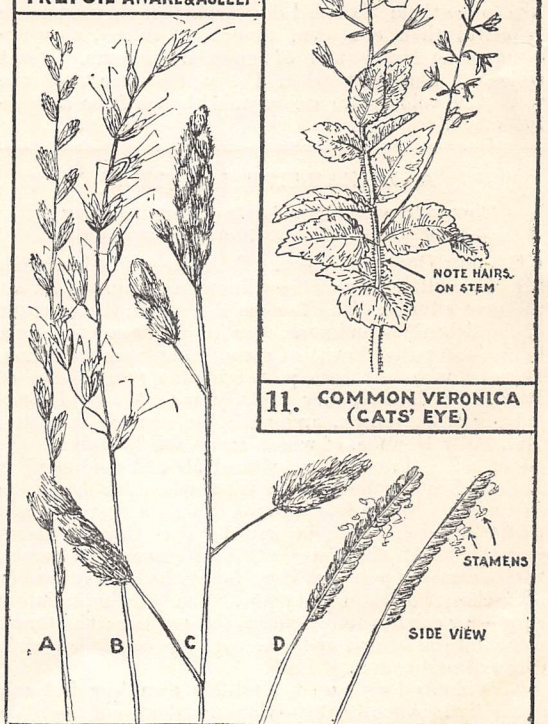
Then, of course, there is Bird's-foot Trefoil in flower and seed; some of the seed-vessels are still carrying the 'keel' of the flower, you see (fig. 9). Do you know that this is one of the plants whose leaves go to sleep? Have you ever noticed them, I wonder? Fig. 10 shows you a sprig with its leaves asleep. I drew it one evening. I always think the leaves look as if they are covering their faces with their hands, as though saying an evening prayer.

The Buttercups are really over, only the seed-vessels remaining; but, of course, there is some Veronica (Cat's-eyes)—those pretty little blue flowers which nearly always fall as soon as touched. Fig. 11 shows a sprig. There are two interesting points about this plant—one is that the flowers have each only two stamens, which is a very unusual number. The usual number is four or five for plants of this kind, but it is evident that



9&10. BIRDS'-FOOT-TREFOIL AWAKE & ASLEEP!

11. COMMON VERONICA (CATS' EYE)



12. FOUR GRASSES. A. RYE GRASS. B. YELLOW OAT. C. COCKS-FOOT-GRASS. D. FOX TAIL GRASS.

Dame Nature found that these veronicas could do with only two, so she reduced the number to two. Certain it is that you rarely find a flower of a veronica which has not received pollen, which is what the stamens are for.

The other point of interest is that the four-sided stems have stiff hairs on the alternate angles (see fig. 11). These are generally supposed to prevent small insects from crawling up from the ground.

Lastly, I give you sketches of the Grasses of my field, which are all now in *fruit*, for seeds are contained in all these heads of 'flowers.' But some weeks ago they all had stamens hanging out just as the plantain has now. Grasses are a very confusing study, because they are so much alike. In fig. 12 I just give sketches of the four which are in this field, but, of course, there are many more in other fields, and not perhaps these. In a later article I hope to be able to tell you much more about grasses.

In the figure at A you have Rye Grass; at B, Yellow Oat; at C, Cock's-foot Grass; and at D, Fox-tail. Each of these heads of course carries many flowers, so they add greatly to the number contained in a meadow.

Now, next time you have the chance to examine a hayfield count and see how many flowers *you* can find. You may find some I had not in my field, but you will, I think, find most of mine. Anyhow, I feel sure you will agree it is quite exciting work, and you will be astonished to see what a pretty cluster you will have if you gather specimens of each. I often think we do not half appreciate our wild flowers: we read about the wild flowers of other lands, and think that we would like to see them, though I doubt whether they are more beautiful than our own, though, of course, they are often much larger and of gorgeous colours. But I believe I am right when I say that most of the wonderful colours are accompanied by far from delightful scents.

A PLEASANT LODGER.

'Be useful where thou dwellest, that they may
Both want and wish thy pleasing presence still.'

SO says George Herbert. Whether or not Benjamin Franklin ever read these lines, he certainly did what the poet advises. The famous American, the inventor of the lightning-conductor, once lived for some time in a house (now pulled down) in Craven Street, Strand, London. Here he, who had been petted by the great ladies of Paris, made himself very friendly with his good landlady, Mrs. Stevenson, and with her married daughter, Mrs. Polly Hewson, of whose small son he became the godfather. Franklin nicknamed Mrs. Stevenson 'Her Majesty,' and upon one occasion, when she had gone away on a visit, he issued to his friends a sort of mock Court Journal, which he called 'The Craven Street Gazette.' 'At six o'clock this afternoon,' he wrote, 'news came by post that Her Majesty had arrived safely at Rochester on Saturday night. The bells immediately rung—for candles to illuminate the parlour; the Court went into cribbage, and the evening concluded with every demonstration of joy.'

This kindly lodger used to tell his own dear Deborah and Sally in America the sayings and doings of the little Hewsons, and to Mrs. Polly he described the pranks of his lively grandson, 'Bennie Boy.' And when Franklin returned to his own country, he did not forget his London friends. This is an extract from a letter which he wrote to Mrs. Hewson:

'I take it kindly of my grandson that he should remember me; my love to him. I am glad to hear the dear children are all well through the measles. Ben, when I delivered him your blessing, inquired the age of Elizabeth, and thought her yet too young for him; but, as he made no other objection, and that will lessen every day, I have only to wish being still alive to dance with your mother at the wedding.'

THE CONSULTANT.

MY Teddy Bear was flushed and ill,
And no one *cared*, nor cured him, till
Nurse Susan Jane went down to sup,
And then I took my darling up,
And went outside—I don't know how—
Where moonbeams shone on bush and bough;
And there I found a fern-roofed home,
Where dwelt a wise old Doctor Gnome.

I rang his hyacinth night-bell,
And said, 'Please make this patient well!
Ten times to-day he sneezed—"At-choo!"
He has a rash, and a headache too,
And something very wrong and queer
Has happened to his growling gear;
For all night long, with cough and bark,
He keeps me waking through the dark.'

He sounded his chest with a hollow reed,
And gave him a poultice of poppy-seed;
Green *arbor vitæ* berries prickly,
To settle his cough when it grew tickly.
Quite soon my Bear got health and ease,
And when I paid the kind Gnome's fees,
He would not take my sixpence bright,
But a tiny curl, that grew out of sight!

M. I. K. CARRUTHERS.

HELD TO RANSOM.

BY V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 3.)

THE brothers stood together in the passage outside, feeling very small and forlorn in spite of their twelve and fourteen years. Sandy, indeed, looked far younger than his age, although a quick and clever brain was hidden away somewhere behind his dark copper-red hair and the black eyes which always seemed too large for his small, pale face.

Dick was dark-eyed too; so much he had inherited, like Sandy, from his French mother. But otherwise the elder boy resembled more that unknown father of his, who was now in such deadly peril. He was a full head and shoulders taller than Sandy, and very squarely and strongly built for his age. His thick fair hair was the despair of his masters, since it was seldom, if ever, known to be even moderately tidy: but there was a straightforward, sweet-tempered look in his eyes which most people found very attractive.

Dick was the first to speak. 'It's no use standing here,' he said, with a little choke in his voice. 'We'd better go and do what the Head told us.'

By the time that the Matron had given the boys a

good tea, and packed them off to the station, they were nearly themselves again. Considering that they had never seen their father since babyhood, it was no wonder that they could scarcely realise, as yet, how serious matters were, and the fact that they were released from school when the term had hardly begun was something to wonder and rejoice in.

Dick and Sandy arrived very late at the sombre house in Bloomsbury, where their guardian lived, and were promptly packed off to bed without learning anything further.

The next morning they were summoned early to his dark, musty-smelling library, and there an extraordinary story awaited them.

Standing beside Mr. Wilcox, in front of the cheerless gas fireplace, was a strange and imposing figure. It was that of a tall, handsome man, bearded and sunburnt. In spite of his flowing robes they could see that one arm, his right, was missing. He was dressed in white from head to foot, the only colour being that of his red fez cap, and a glimpse of fine embroidery at his throat. His long robe was draped about him in graceful folds, and the pointed hood was thrown back.

He bowed as the two boys came in, and held out his hand; then he touched his lips and breast lightly with his slim finger-tips, and murmured in a deep, soft voice, 'Salaam, Sidi.'

Mr. Wilcox, fussy and dry, with clipped grey whiskers and moustache, introduced the dignified Eastern as Mohammed Achmet el Fasi. 'He was your poor unfortunate father's guide,' he added, 'and his companion, it seems, upon this last most ill-advised and ill-fated expedition. These two young gentlemen,' he went on, turning to the Moor, 'are, as you know, my nephews, Richard and Alexander, the sons of Captain Harland, your late employer. Will you tell them the sad story which you have related to me? But, first, I have one question to ask—a question, the answer to which, in my opinion, is of the utmost importance as confirmation of the truth of your assertions. Richard, do you recognise this book?'

He took from his pocket, and held out for the inspection of the elder boy, a little leather-covered pocket-book, old, stained, and dog-eared.

'Yes,' said Dick, promptly. 'Of course I do. I sent it to Father at Allahabad a year ago.'

'What is it, then?'

'It's a book that was in the little drawer of Mother's old desk. Father wrote and told me where it was, and asked me to send it to him. It was during the last summer holidays. I'm absolutely sure that's the one.'

'So am I,' chimed in Sandy. 'I helped him pack it; I remember that funny black spot on the cover.'

'That will do,' said their guardian. 'Now, Achmet, let them hear what you have to tell.'

The story was a long one, and it took time to relate, for, although the Moor spoke English fluently, he was a true Eastern in his power of, and love for, picturesque description.

He told how the Captain had engaged him for a guide on an expedition into the interior of Morocco, and described how they had been attacked on the bank of a river by Anghera tribesmen.

'There were fifty and more, and they surrounded us on all sides, like hyenas when a camel is sick to death. I fell, wounded in the arm; of a certainty I should have been killed had not the Sidi stood over me, sheltering me with his own body. Yet, in the end, they beat him down, binding him hand and foot. They bore us both to their camp in the mountains, and there I lay at the door of death for many days, nursed by the Sidi, my master. Afterwards, he begged me to come to England bearing this letter, and, to save his life, I obeyed.'

With Sandy leaning on his shoulder, Dick read the letter from his father, written so quietly, so straightforwardly, that it seemed more like an ordinary business transaction than the story of a barbarous crime.

It explained that a ransom of twenty thousand dollars, or something like two thousand five hundred pounds, was demanded for his release. Until that sum was forthcoming he would be kept a close prisoner. Achmet was to return to Fex, his native town, there to await the money, which, on receiving, he would carry to the tribe who held Captain Harland prisoner.

A book was sent with the letter to prove the good faith of its bearer; it was to be given to the Captain's two sons, since it had belonged to their mother, and would explain why their father had penetrated into the interior of Morocco at such grave risk.

At the end of the letter, Harland begged that, if the money could not be raised without great difficulty, they should forget him altogether and leave him to his fate. It was possible, although not probable, that he might be able to escape; more possible still, that, before help could come, he would be beyond its reach.

Then came the last words, which Dick could scarcely read through the hot mist which blurred his eyes.

'I send my love to my two boys. It is hard to believe that I have scarcely seen them, harder to think that they will not remember their father. But, whatever happens, I shall think of them always, even if we never meet in this world.'

Whilst Achmet told his story and the boys read the letter, Mr. Wilcox had been turning over the pages of the little brown book, apparently without much interest in its contents. Presently, turning to Achmet, he questioned him.

'Captain Harland told you that he went to Morocco in search of something?'

'Yes, Sidi; in search of something very great in value. More than that I do not know.'

'Well, it is pretty evident to me from what I read here that he was set on some wild goose chase. Listen to this.'

He adjusted his glasses, and holding the little book to the light, he read from the last page:

'To find the treasure, you must follow the coast south and west from the town of Rabat, until you come to a small river. This cross, and follow the further bank through miles of forest. When you again reach open country, travel due south for a day's journey. The village where I was imprisoned may no longer exist, but its position may be known by a low hill, shaped like a saddle, which stands behind it. Upon its slopes is the tomb of a saint, much reverenced; white in colour, with a round dome. To the north-west of the village——'

'There the journal ends abruptly, with a page or two torn out,' Mr. Wilcox announced, laying down the book. 'It is clear to me, knowing poor Alec as I did, that it was this most absurd story that took him to Morocco. Well, well, I must have time to think it all over. It's a bad business—a bad business! You may go now, boys.'

(*Continued on page* 23.)

"Standing in front of the fireplace was a strange and imposing figure."

"Guido peered down into the pit."

LOWER THAN THE BEASTS.

A Fable of the Middle Ages.

THE seneschal of a certain Emperor, being a very unpleasant, tyrannical sort of person, was greatly disliked. One day, while riding in the forest, he met with an accident. By this man's own orders, pits had been dug and covered with leaves, with the purpose of entrapping the beasts. And now, just as the seneschal was thinking to himself, 'Is there any one in the whole empire more powerful than I am?' he rode upon one of these pitfalls, and he and his horse tumbled together into the hole.

This pit must have been quite a spacious apartment, to accommodate so many creatures! for when the man and horse fell into it, they found there a lion, a monkey, and a serpent.

The terrified seneschal shouted for help, and was heard by a poor man named Guido, who, with his ass, had come into the forest for firewood, by the sale of which he got his living. Guido hastened to the spot whence the sound proceeded, and peered down into the pit.

'Do get me out of this hole!' implored the seneschal, 'and I will make a rich man of you for life.'

'But,' said Guido, 'I *must* collect my faggots; I have no other means of getting my living, and if I neglect my work I and my family must starve.'

'Never mind about your faggots to-day,' said the anxious prisoner. 'You will lose nothing, but gain much, by helping me. Have I not said that I will make you rich?'

So Guido left his work, and went to the city, where he procured a long rope, which he let down into the pit, bidding the seneschal fasten it around his waist.

But before the man could do so, the lion rushed forward, and, seizing the rope, was drawn up. The beast immediately ran off into the wood, and the cord was again let down. This time, the monkey, emboldened by the success of the lion, bounded over the man's head, shook the cord, and was drawn up to liberty. Without waiting to say, 'Thank you,' he hurried off home.

When the rope was let down for the third time, the serpent twisted himself around it, and so escaped.

'Oh, my friend!' exclaimed the seneschal, 'do draw me up quickly, now that the beasts have gone!'

Guido now drew up, first the seneschal, then his horse. Both were unhurt, and the seneschal immediately rode away to his quarters in the palace.

Guido went home empty-handed. His wife wondered much why he had no wood. She also noticed his dejection, and inquired its cause. He told her what had happened: how he had rescued the seneschal, and had been promised a great reward, but had received nothing. The woman's face brightened as she listened.

'Of course,' she said, 'the gentleman would not have with him sufficient money to reward you for so great a service. You must apply to him at the palace to-morrow morning.'

So the next morning the woman made her husband dress himself in his best clothes, and sent him off to the palace. There he inquired for the seneschal, who most ungratefully not only denied all knowledge of him, but even ordered him to be well whipped for his impudence in making such a demand. The porter, obeying his cruel master, beat the poor fellow within an inch of his life. He just managed to crawl home; then, as a result of the brutality with which he had been treated, he had a long and severe illness, during which all his little property melted away.

Guido, however, recovered at last, and at once went back to his occupation in the wood.

On his first day of resuming work, he saw coming towards him ten asses carrying packs, and led by a lion. Looking closely at the beast, he saw that it was the lion which he had liberated from the pit. The lion pointed with his paw towards the asses, then in the direction of Guido's cottage. Evidently he meant that Guido was to take the asses home with him. This the man did. The lion, fawning upon him, followed him to his door; then, joyfully wagging his tail, ran back to the wood.

Guido caused proclamation to be made that if any one had lost asses, the owner was to apply to him; but as nobody claimed them he opened the packages, and was delighted to find them full of money.

The next day, Guido, upon arriving at the forest, found that he had forgotten to bring with him the iron instrument which he used to cleave the wood. Then the monkey which he had rescued came to his assistance, and worked diligently for him with teeth and nails.

And the next day after that, Guido, who had sat down to prepare his axe, saw the serpent which had been in the pit. In its mouth it carried a stone of three colours—white, black, and red. Opening its mouth, it let the stone fall upon Guido's knees, and then glided away. This stone did wonders for Guido, who by its means became very wealthy, and obtained a high post in the army.

The Emperor, hearing of the stone, and of the wonderful properties which it possessed, naturally wished to see it. He sent for Guido, to whom he said that he would purchase the stone. Guido agreed to sell it for three hundred florins, and, taking it from a little coffer, he placed it in the hands of the Emperor, who very greatly admired it.

'Tell me,' he said to Guido, 'how you came to possess such a wondrous and beautiful thing.'

So Guido had to relate the whole story. He told of the rescue from the pit, of the seneschal's cruelty, of the gratitude and gifts bestowed upon him by the lion, the monkey, and the serpent.

Then the Emperor sent for the wicked seneschal, and upbraided him sharply.

'What is this that I hear of you?' he said. 'You are a monster of ingratitude! The lion, monkey, and serpent have shown themselves far, far nobler than you. Here and now, therefore, I strip you of your dignity, which I bestow upon Guido.'

Thus, to the joy of all good men, was the humble Guido honoured and the overbearing seneschal punished.

E. DYKE.

A TOY OF HATE.

IN an Indian museum there is to be seen a curious object—a sort of toy, invented for the amusement of Tippoo Sahib in his palace at Mysore.

It is a life-sized automatic tiger in the act of devouring a British soldier lying prostrate under its claws. Inside the automaton there is a musical-box—only it is not 'musical'—which, on being set in motion by the turning of a handle, emits sounds intended as imitations of a tiger's growls and the cries of his unhappy victim.

This uncanny object, together with other evidences of the prince's cruel nature, was found in Tippoo's palace at the taking of Seringapatam.

'DAWSON'S PANTHER.'

By Harold Bindloss, Author of 'Jimmy Carteret,' &c.

(*Concluded from page* 10.)

JAKE brought Tom to a pile of fallen trunks on the edge of an open space. A tree in falling had brought several others down, and they lay across each other, the top of the highest perhaps twenty feet from the ground. Beneath were crossed branches and tangled undergrowth, through which one could hardly force one's way.

'The panther's in here,' Jake said shortly. 'Wouldn't cross the open. Best plan's to take the top log.'

He scrambled on to the massive trunk, and Tom followed, carrying his axe by the middle. The rough bark gave a good foothold, and he slowly made his way upwards along the tilted log, though the broken branches hindered him. In a few minutes, however, Jake stopped, and they looked down. The light was dim below; great boughs ran downwards between the trunks, but in one place Tom saw an opening. The brush was thin there and bare rock cropped out, but the hole was partly covered by the fallen trees. It was like looking into a dark cave. He was conscious of no definite sound, but he felt that there was something in the gloom below.

'Mush!' Jake called.

A faint bark came out of the shadow, and was followed by a deep, savage snarl.

'That fixes it,' Jake said quietly. 'He's alive; we've got to take him out.' He dropped to another log, four or five feet lower down, and getting between two branches thrust his rifle forward and gazed into the shadow. Tom, following with some trouble, thought he distinguished an object that looked like an animal at the bottom of the hole. Then the rifle muzzle jerked, red sparks leaped out, and, while the report echoed among the trees, smoke filled his eyes. He could not see through it, but there was a snarl and a movement among the leaves. Then the smoke cleared, and he saw Jake struggling savagely with the ejector. 'She's jammed! Empty shell won't come out!' he gasped.

It looked as if Mush had heard, for there was a pitiful whimper that sounded like a despairing appeal for help. Tom afterwards admitted that he did not stop to think, because if he had done so he would not have gone. He had a hazy feeling that Mush trusted him, and would have seized *his* enemy had he been attacked. Besides, he knew that if he hesitated his nerve would give way. Holding the axe clear of his body he jumped from the log, and plunging through the undergrowth came down safely.

The half-light was puzzling, but he distinguished a small, still, black and white object not far off, and behind it something else was huddled on the ground. It was vaguely like an animal, and he thought it was crouching for a spring. Well, it was his life or the panther's now, and he was glad to remember that the axe would not jamb. He had learned to use it pretty well, and had ground the blade keen before he left the ranch.

Drawing a deep breath, he swung it behind his shoulders, letting his body follow the movement of the long haft, and with a harsh, coughing snarl, the thing he watched launched itself forward. He vaguely remembered that Jake had told him to keep his eye on the notch, and tried to gauge the distance to the middle of the flat head. He saw the white teeth as he swung forward, and then they were lost in a glimmer of bright steel.

There was a crunch and a jar; the axe was wrenched from his hand, and losing his balance he staggered and fell against a branch. Before he recovered, Jake dropped from the trunk above amidst a crash of breaking twigs, threw the rifle to his shoulder, and suddenly lowered it.

'Guess I needn't shoot,' he said in a hoarse voice. 'Are you all right?'

Tom murmured that he was. Now the strain was over, he felt limp, and a trifle sick; it was hard to pull himself together, and he blinked as he looked about. The first thing his eyes rested on was the panther, lying two or three yards off, with the axe-blade half buried in its head. Then he saw Jake pull off his overall jacket and roll it round the dog. Tom watched him dully, and Jake began to talk.

'Think he has a rib broken, and his hide's all torn, but we'll take him home and give him his chance. I plugged the panther; bullet went through the thick of his hind leg, and I reckon that's why he missed you. Anyhow, you picked the only spot where you had room to use the axe; must have been cooler than I was. I jumped soon as I'd got the empty shell out of my gun.'

'I didn't know I had room; I didn't pick the place,' Tom confessed. 'But I suppose you put a fresh cartridge in.'

'Why!' said Jake, who stopped while he jerked open the breach. Then he looked at Tom, and added stupidly: 'No; I sure forgot!'

Tom smiled feebly. 'Then you were going to shoot the panther with an unloaded gun?'

Jake looked embarrassed for a moment, and then they both laughed. The laughter was rather forced, but it was a relief, because it eased the strain they felt.

'That's a thing you don't want to tell the boys at the settlement,' he said. 'I allow I'd sooner not give them a pick like that on me. But s'pose you chop a way out: we've got to get Mush home soon as we can.'

Tom set to work with the axe, but it was half an hour before he had cut a passage through the tangle. Then they hurried back to the ranch, where Mr. Winthrop examined the dog.

'The poor animal's badly mauled, and two of his ribs are broken,' he said. 'In fact, I don't see how you found him alive. A wolf would have torn him to bits, but these big cats, like the small kind, don't kill their victims at once. However, we must do our best for him, and he may pull through, though I'm doubtful.'

'You have just got to save him, Dad,' Jake replied.

Mr. Winthrop did what he could, and when he had finished and Mush, wrapped in bandages, was laid on a soft cushion in his box, turned to the boys.

'Now you had better tell me all about it. I don't quite understand the thing.'

They explained what had happened, and Mr. Winthrop looked thoughtful. 'You were very rash, and a good hunter is cautious. Still, now you have come through it safe, I suppose I must admit that sometimes rashness is better than selfish caution. Anyhow, in one way, I don't know that I'm sorry you were willing to attack a wounded panther with an axe and empty rifle in order to save a dog.'

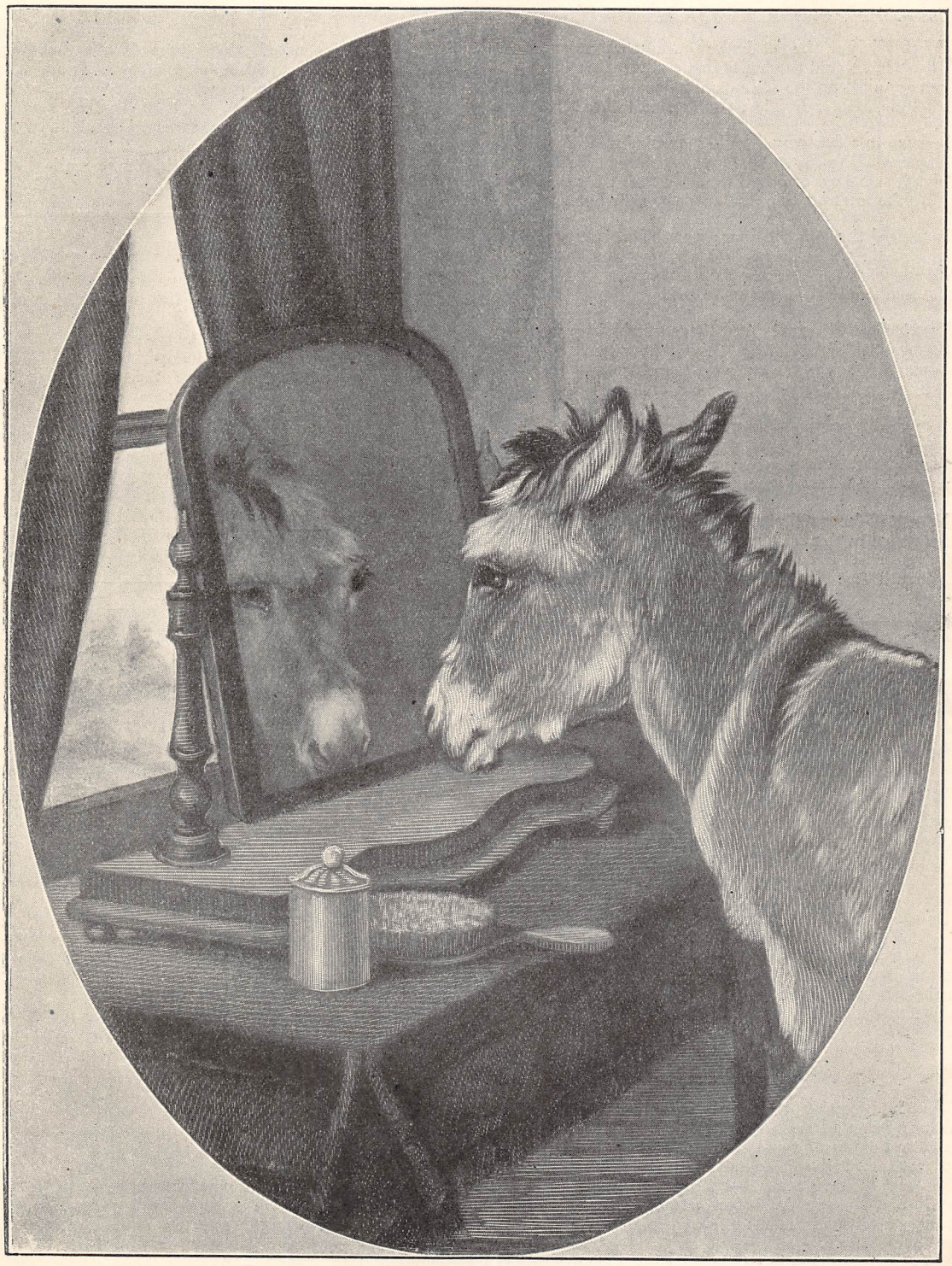
"It was his life or the panther's now."

'But the dog was Mush, and I didn't know the gun wasn't loaded,' Jake replied with some embarrassment.

'He'd have gone if he had known,' Tom interposed.

Mr. Winthrop's eyes twinkled. 'It's possible; Jake is seldom very wise. Well, if I'm lucky in selling my fat stock, I must see if I can buy you a rifle that won't jam to use between you. Now I think we'll take the hired man and go back for the skin.'

Mush recovered, though he never got rid of an ugly scar, and Tom has now a ranch of his own. A photograph of a black-and-white terrier hangs on the wall, and on the floor lies a panther-skin with a slit in the head.



"'Who is this? How surprisingly odd!'"

NEDDY AND THE LOOKING-GLASS.

WHEN Ned, the pet donkey, went roaming one day,
He entered the house in a confident way;
Then stumped up the stairs as if some one had said:
'It's time, Master Donkey, you trotted to bed!'

He came to a doorway. 'Well, surely,' said he,
'The stable I've lost, I shall very soon see;
Though somehow or other, the path that I roam
Is not the least bit like the meadows near home.'

He tripped through the door; o'er the carpet he trod;
Then cried: 'Who is this? How surprisingly odd!
A donkey! And yet, very little like *me*,
For head so untidy I never did see!

'Just look at his ears! And those rough shaggy eyes!
His fore-lock entangled most shamefully lies.
No wonder the master considers it right
To keep such a donkey as *that* out of sight.'

He turned from the glass with an air of disdain:
'I don't want to meet with the creature again.
It's shameful that one so disgraceful as he
Is petted by folk who are kindly to *me*.'

He trotted downstairs, and he trotted outside;
He frisked in the meadows, green, windy and wide,
Yet never has learned, 'tis my duty to say,
The truth that the looking-glass taught him that day.

JOHN LEA.

'GO' AND 'COME.'

A GENTLEMAN owning a farm which was worth about two hundred pounds a year, after muddling along for some time, was compelled to sell half of it to pay his debts, and to let the other half to a farmer on a lease of twenty-one years. After a time, the farmer expressed a wish to buy the land.

'Why! how's this?' exclaimed the gentleman. '*I* could not live upon my own farm, and yet *you*, who have paid rent, are able to buy it!'

'Two words,' said the farmer, 'make all the difference. You said, "Go!" I say, "Come!" You lay in bed, or went a-pleasuring, and left your business to others; I rise early, and look after my business myself.'

I once heard of a lazy old woman who used to lie late in her own bed, and prod her daughter with a stick to make her get out of *her* bed. That old woman said, 'Go!' and not 'Come!'

The following anecdote tells how George Washington once rebuked a Jack-in-office who said 'Go!' and not 'Come!'

The commander of a small squad was giving orders about a beam of timber which the men were trying to raise to the top of some military works. It was a difficult job, and the commander's voice was often heard shouting, 'Heave away!'—'There she goes!'—'Heave on!'—and so on. An officer, not in uniform, who was riding past, asked the shouter why he did not take hold and help a little.

'*I?*' said the man in command, very much astonished. 'Sir, *I* am a *corporal!*'

'Oh, indeed!' said the officer. 'I was not aware of that.'

Then he dismounted, and laboured with the others until the sweat stood in drops on his forehead; and when the task was finished he turned to the commander, and said: 'Mr. Corporal, when you have another such job on hand, send for your Commander-in-Chief, and I will come and help you a second time.'

The corporal was thunder-struck, for he realised that this was General Washington! E. D.

THE WORTHIEST MAN.

TWO ancient Greeks, Aristippus and Æschines, had, unfortunately, quarrelled. But one day Aristippus, with a kind, gentle face and voice, came to the other. 'Æschines,' he said, 'shall we be friends?'

'With all my heart,' replied Æschines.

'I am older than you,' said Aristippus, 'and so I thought that the first advance ought to come from me.'

'Yes,' said Æschines, 'and you are not only older, you are also better than I. You are the worthiest man, for I began the strife, and you began the peace.'

But there must have been not a little worthiness in Æschines to enable him to recognise the greater worthiness of Aristippus. Mean and petty natures do not thus frankly acknowledge the superiority of others.

TRUE CONQUERORS.

A CHINESE Emperor was told that his enemies had stirred up an insurrection in one of the distant provinces. 'Come, then, my friends,' he said. 'Follow me! I promise you that we shall quickly destroy these our foes.' He marched forward, and at his approach the rebels submitted. All thought that he would now take a terrible revenge; but, on the contrary, the captives were treated with the greatest humanity.

'What is the meaning of this?' inquired the First Minister of the Emperor. 'How is it that you do not fulfil your promise? You gave your royal word that your enemies should be destroyed, and, instead of destroying them, you have not only spared and pardoned them, but to some of them you are showing special kindness and favour.'

'I promised,' replied the Emperor, 'to destroy my enemies, and I have kept my word. These men are my enemies no longer, for I have changed them into friends.'

A similar story is told of Philip of Macedon. Arcadius the Argive was incessantly railing at him. And when Arcadius ventured into Philip's dominions, the King's courtiers told him that now there was an excellent opportunity to punish his enemy for past insults, and to put it out of his power to repeat them. But Philip, instead of seizing Arcadius and putting him to death, loaded him with courtesies and kindnesses, and let him freely go on his way.

Some time afterwards, word was brought to Macedon that the King's former enemy had become one of his warmest admirers, and sang his praises wherever he went. On hearing this, King Philip turned to his courtiers with a smile—'Am I not,' he said, 'a better physician than you?'

A BURMESE LEGEND.

A BURMESE potter was so jealous of a prosperous washerman that he tried to ruin him by inducing the King to order him to do an impossible thing. Should the washerman fail to execute the order (however impossible it might be), he would, as the potter knew well, fall into dire disgrace, and probably lose his life. So this wicked potter persuaded the King to command the washerman to wash one of the royal black elephants white, in order that he (the King) might be 'Lord of the White Elephant.' The washerman, however, knew how to defend himself. He replied that by the rules of his art he must have a vessel large enough to wash the elephant in. The King then ordered the potter to make such a vessel. It was made, but was crushed by the first step upon it of the elephant's heavy foot. The potter was permitted to try again many times, but always failed, and so at last he himself was ruined—caught in the trap which he had set for another.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 15.)

CHAPTER II.

THREE days passed, during which Dick and Sandy were told nothing more by their uncle. The little book remained in his keeping, and, in spite of their father's injunction, he showed no inclination to hand it over to them. Meanwhile the boys wandered miserably about the house, or sat in the soot-blackened Square garden, too depressed and anxious to read or amuse themselves.

A last Dick was summoned by Mr. Wilcox to the study once more, but when the interview was ended he returned to Sandy in no cheerful mood. 'We might just as well have stayed at school,' he said, flinging himself down on his bed in the room which the two boys shared. 'He won't do anything, and he won't let us do anything either.'

'You don't mean to say that he's going to let Father be——' Sandy began, with horror-struck eyes, but Dick cut him short.

'No, I don't mean that, of course. Uncle's going to do his best, I suppose; of course, he's jolly badly off. Instead of trying to rescue Father at once, he means to save up to pay the ransom—and perhaps it will take years... There's our school money...'

'Why, aren't we going back?' Sandy asked.

'No, of course not. Why, it means more than three hundred pounds a year altogether, Uncle says... You and I have got to go into situations; he can't afford to keep us here doing nothing.'

'Then perhaps if we earned a lot of money...' Sandy began, but again his wiser brother cut him short, rather peremptorily.

'We shan't get more than a few shillings a week at most—not enough for our keep. And we want nearly three thousand pounds for the ransom—oh, it's sickening! And to think of Father a prisoner—perhaps...'

But Dick could get no further. He turned on his face, burying it in the pillow, and fairly sobbed aloud, whilst Sandy sat by, and stared hopelessly in front of him, with wide frightened eyes. 'Can't we do anything, Dick?' he asked at last.

'Don't see what,' his brother answered in muffled tones.

'Let's get hold of that Arab chap and find out more about things.'

'He's gone,' said Dick disconsolately. 'Gone back to Morocco yesterday, to—to wait for the money to be sent.'

Certainly the position seemed a pretty hopeless one, both for their father and for themselves. From what the boys knew of their uncle's household, it was very clear that their life in London would not be a happy one, for Mr. Wilcox was a poor man, and his wife took no pains to hide the fact that Dick and Sandy were an unwelcome addition to the family.

For a fortnight things went from bad to worse. The boys became pale, fretful, and dispirited, their aunt complained of them continually, and their uncle, unsuccessful in his efforts to find them any employment, began, somewhat unfairly, to make them feel his resentment.

Sandy was the first to think of the great plan. It was a wet, cheerless summer evening, and the Square looked more dreary than ever from their bedroom window. There had been the usual trouble with Mrs. Wilcox that afternoon, this time over a question of muddy boots, and the boys, deprived of supper, were feeling particularly sore and wretched.

'Dick, what about that treasure?' Sandy, kicking up his heels as he lay face downward on the floor, spoke suddenly.

'Well, *what* about it?' Dick grunted discouragingly.

'I expect we and Father are the only people who know anything at all about it, except Uncle, and he doesn't count.'

'I don't know what you're driving at.'

'Why, wouldn't it be a splendid thing if we could find it, and pay the ransom, and set Father free?'

Dick turned slowly from the window, and stared down at his audacious brother, whilst the thought matured slowly in his less active mind. 'D'you mean, go out to Morocco after it?' he asked at last.

'Yes; why not? We're not wanted here. Aunt Jane only said this afternoon that we were a couple of useless mouths to feed.'

'But how can we do it?' Dick persisted.

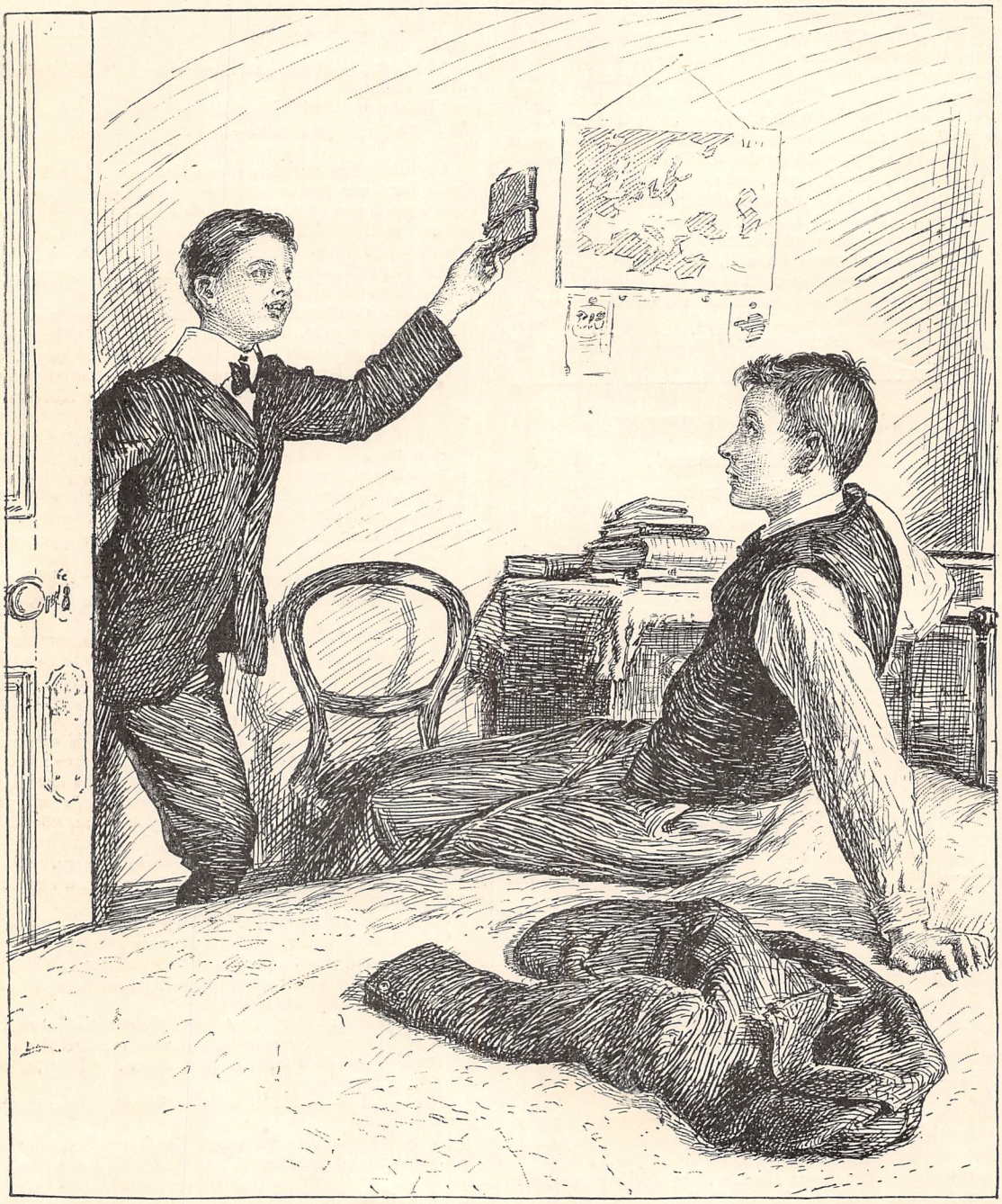
'Oh, I don't know yet! We'll find a way, if we try. But I tell you what. The first thing to do is to get the little old book and read everything that it says about the treasure and how to find it.'

Sandy was on his feet, his eyes bright with the excitement of his new plan; he had almost reached the door before Dick realised what he was about. 'I say, where are you going?' he asked.

'To get the book!' Sandy rejoined, and vanished forthwith.

He was back in an unexpectedly short time, carrying his prize in high triumph. 'It wasn't a bit difficult!' he cried. 'They're all at supper, and I just walked straight into the library. There the book was, shoved in just at the top of the top drawer of Uncle's desk—he had never even bothered to lock it up. Well, he won't get it back again in a hurry; it's ours, and he'd no right to keep it.'

(*Continued on page* 26.)



"He came back, carrying his prize in triumph."

"We were landed at the Pirate City."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 23.)

TAKING the precaution first to lock the door, the two boys curled themselves up side by side on Dick's bed to read their treasure together. On the first page were written the words, very elaborately, with many flourishes, 'Thomas Jesmond, his booke,' and Sandy glanced up with a surprised exclamation. 'Jesmond—that's your other name, Dick.'

'Yes, it was the name of Mother's mother before she was married; she was English, you know,' the elder boy answered soberly. 'So I expect that is how Mother came to have the book; this Jesmond must have been some sort of an ancestor of ours. Now, don't talk any more, Sandy, till we've finished; I can't read properly if I'm interrupted, 'specially this curled-up sort of writing.'

Silence fell on the room as the two boys read, with Sandy's arm flung over Dick's shoulder. They read for a long time, pausing only to turn the yellowed leaves.

And this was what they found written in the old book:

'Here is the True Statement of me, Thomas Jesmond, Master Mariner, in this Year of Grace sixteen hundred and forty-one, and in the sixteenth Year of the Reign of Our Gracious Sovereign Charles, by whose Mercy and Power I was myself saved from a living Death. Of how I was taken by Sally Pirates; of the evil Treatment that I received at their Hands; of my Strange Adventures; and of my Escape and Rescue.

'In the Year sixteen hundred and twenty-eight, I sailed in command of the Brig *Rosamond* from the Port of London, bound for Lisbon in Portugal, with a cargo of fine silks and linen stuffs. We met with fine Weather and fair Winds until well to the southard of the Bay of Biscay, where we sighted a strange Vessel, sparred like a Brig, but some three times our Tonnage, and carrying many Guns and armed Men.

'Seeing that she purposed to attack us, we made ready to defend ourselves as best we might, but the Pirate was over strong, and after long and fierce Fighting, the *Rosamond* was sunk, and I myself and six of my Crew taken prisoners.

'We were loaded with heavy Chains and flung into the stinking Hold of the Pirate Vessel, in which foul Place we lay for long. When at last we were brought on Deck, the ship lay at Anchor off the mouth of a great River. A Town was built on either Bank, and very pleasant they looked to the Eye, with their white Walls and green foliage of the Trees. That on the left I afterwards learnt was called Sally; that on the other side was the Town of Rabat.

'We were landed at the Pirate City of Sally, in the country that is called Morocco, and of our sufferings during the time that followed I can hardly bring myself to speak. We were kept at work in the Day-time making a kind of cement which these Moors use for building. They call it Tabby. If we flagged at any Time, we were thrashed unmercifully and in the most agonising manner on the Soles of our Feet.

'At Night we were driven to descend into a deep Pit, and the Ladder was afterwards drawn up. There we lay until Morning amidst filth and vermin.

'After many Months, by which Time I had learned somewhat of the Language which is spoken by these Moors, I was bought for a Gardener by the Kaïd or Governor of Rabat, and my Lot became far easier. Later, by protecting his only Son from a Miscreant who would have stolen the young Boy, I was fortunately able to win the especial Favour of the Kaïd, and he caused me to become his Secretary, since I write a fair Hand. Thus I came to know all his Affairs, and was taken into his Confidence in many strange Matters.

'I had been seven Years in Bondage, when it happened that the Sultan of Morocco heard Rumours of my Master's Wealth, and sent, demanding an immense Sum of Money, as Payment for his high Position as Governor. Since the Kaïd refused to pay this Extortion, he was summoned to the Capital, and went, knowing full well that there was but little likelihood of his Return.

'Nevertheless, he determined at all Hazards to secure his Fortune for his only Son, and since I had won his whole Confidence, he chose me to hide his Gold in some secret Place.

'I left the City by Night, carrying the Treasure in the packs of two Donkies, stowed for safety beneath certain Merchandise, being instructed by the Kaïd, before he departed, to bestow the Money in some very secret Spot, keeping a careful Plan of the Place chosen. I travelled for many Days to the southward until I reached the foothills of the Atlas Mountains and began to cast about for a suitable hiding-place for the Treasure.

'The spot which I chose at last was a small Cave or Cleft, well hidden by undergrowth. I stowed the Bags of Gold in a Hollow of the Rock itself, and, having brought with me a little Lime, with this I mixed a coarse Cement, covering the hollow Place and smoothing the Plaster. Afterwards I so fouled it with Mud and Leaves that it appeared as part almost of the Living Rock.

'As for the Bearings and Marks by which the Place might be known, I entrusted them to my memory, not daring to set them down as yet. And it was well I did not, for, after many Perils and Passages, I was taken prisoner by the Sheik or Chief of a desert Tribe, who cast me into the common Prison of the Village. This was a deep Pit dug in the Ground, like that in which we were placed at Sally, yet deeper and more foul.

'Sometimes I was left for Days together without food or water, and I feared that in the end I should die there a Dog's Death. One thing I did during those dreadful Days. I had neither Pen nor Paper with which to write, yet I dared no longer trust to my Memory alone to remember the Plan of the Place where the Kaïd's treasure lay.

'I therefore drew a Map and wrote down what Directions were necessary upon a Flat Stone, scraping out the Lines and Letters with the broken Blade of a Knife. The writing I did in English, that no one in these wild Parts might read, even if he should find the Stone, the which I afterwards buried, covering it carefully with Sand.

'In the End I was delivered from the Pit through the kindness of a Jew who was imprisoned with me for a time, but obtained his Release. He cast down a Rope by Night, giving me Food and Drink in plenty, and setting me upon the Road to Rabat. I could travel but slowly owing to my weakness, yet three days' Journey brought me to the Sea-coast, and there a wonderful Surprise awaited me.

'Turning to the northward, I looked towards Rabat, and there, lying at Anchor with the English Flag flying,

were eight of the King's Ships, sent for the purpose of rescuing Christian Slaves, as I was afterwards to discover.

'I was taken aboard the *Rowbucke*, but not until I had made certain that of my old Master the Kaïd's family no soul remained alive, Man, Woman, or Child. The Sultan had revenged himself thus for the loss of the Kaïd's Treasure.

'So far as I know, the Gold lies still where I left it buried. Most certainly I shall never return to find it, since my health is broken; for no Treasure on Earth, moreover, would I send one dear to me to that accursed Land.

'It may be, however, that in the Years to come my Family may fall on evil Times, and the Land of Morocco may become less barbarous and wicked than it is to-day. I therefore set down here the Directions by which may be found the Prison Pit where the Stone lies hid.'

(Continued on page 34.)

GÉNÉRAL BIBOT.

AARS was in ruins!

Once such a pretty, gay little town, with its white houses, tiny shops, and busy little market-place, it was now only a heap of blackened cinders. Nothing remained to show where it had stood, except part of the inn, a barn, and half the town gates.

The enemy had not even thought it worth while to leave soldiers in possession, for a few women, and a little boy, were the only inhabitants who had escaped from their swords.

Madame Pierre had been the proprietress of the inn. She lived there still, poor soul, with Bibot, her little boy, and three old women. They all lived together in what was once the *salon* of the inn, a dark place without windows; but it had a roof, strong walls, and some crimson plush chairs, and Madame Pierre had always been so proud of her *salon*, and she was proud of it still!

There were three people in Aars of whom the enemy knew nothing! After the terrible battle which had turned Madame's hair white and left Bibot fatherless, Madame had found three poor wounded Indians lying in the sodden fields outside where Aars had once stood. At night Madame had dragged them to the barn, and there fed and nursed them back to health and strength. Whenever the enemy's sentries visited Aars the Indians hid themselves beneath the cattle's straw, still as death; and they had never been discovered.

Bibot spent hours of the day sitting with the Indian soldiers, listening to their stories of life in the far-away villages of the East, where tigers prowled at night, and where peacocks flew wild among the trees. So weeks passed by.

One evening two great motor-cars drew up silently among the ruins of Aars. Madame Pierre, in an agony, saw the hated uniforms of the enemy by the light of the candle she held aloft, when a fist had banged on the door of the *salon*, and she had been roused from her fitful sleep to open it. The orderly struck her on the cheek with his leather glove. 'Food, woman, quickly, for four generals on their road to T——.'

'The generals have missed the road,' faltered Madame. 'It lies far to the right from here; but I have eggs, bread, and a little bacon, which I will prepare.'

The angry generals, annoyed at missing the road, clanked into the dark *salon* and shouted for wine. They sent their men for the motor lamps to light the gloomy place, while they consulted their maps.

Bibot ran to the door, and watched the grey-coated soldiers getting wine and comforts for their officers from behind the cars.

'Tell your mother to hasten with the meal,' said one, threateningly; 'we must not stop here an hour.'

Bibot ran to give the message, and hurried back. He stood watching the soldiers, looking so innocent, with his finger in his mouth, but listening intently to all that was said. Bibot was not stupid; to-night he was quivering with passion. He had seen a red mark rising on his mother's cheek where one of these men had struck her. 'Cruel man, I will punish him!' cried poor helpless Bibot in his heart, and he listened to hear the plans which they were discussing; and he made plans too.

The soldiers had missed their road hastening to a council of war with the commander-in-chief—there was no time to wait—they feared that large numbers of the defending troops were not far behind them—but the generals *would* eat—it was a great risk——

Bibot drank in all their grumbling, and made more plans! The soldiers carried the lamps and the cases of wine into the *salon*. It was now thick in the smoke of the generals' cigars. Bibot choked and coughed as he looked into the room. At one end of the table the officers were poring over their maps; at the other end, Madame Pierre, with swollen cheek, was setting the few knives and forks she had upon a srowy tablecloth. The two soldiers began unpacking the wine, kneeling in the far corner of the room.

Now was Bibot's time! 'Quick, Mother!' whispered Bibot. Madame Pierre saw the fear and excitement in the boy's eyes, and she followed him outside into the ruined passage.

Quick as thought Bibot turned the great key of the door in the double lock. 'Put the bar across, Mother,' he whispered, hoarsely, 'and they are our prisoners.'

'They will kill us, Bibot—oh! my child,' cried Madame Pierre; but her trembling fingers dropped the great bar in its place, as Bibot ordered.

'They cannot reach us, Mother; they cannot undo that great door that stood against their own big guns. Quick, I will fetch the Indians!'

Bibot was out of sight before Madame Pierre had recovered from her astonishment. Then she began to run after him, for heavy fists were banging on the great door, and voices crying, 'Open! open!' in a manner that made Madame's blood run cold.

The watchful Indians heard Bibot's little sabots clattering down the silent road. One was cooking the evening meal, one was peacefully smoking, and Ram Chun was sharpening the great blade of his knife, which was such a deadly weapon in his powerful brown hand.

'Ram Chun—come help us—I have taken some prisoners—oh! Ram Chun—come—they can't get out—oh! Ram Chun—great generals—cruel great generals——' and here Bibot flung himself upon the Indian, half laughing and half crying.

It was as well that Madame Pierre had run after him, for in a moment she had explained what had happened.

'We come,' smiled Ram Chun, with deep satisfaction.

The Indians sped silently along the street. They

"'Come help us—I have taken some prisoners!'"

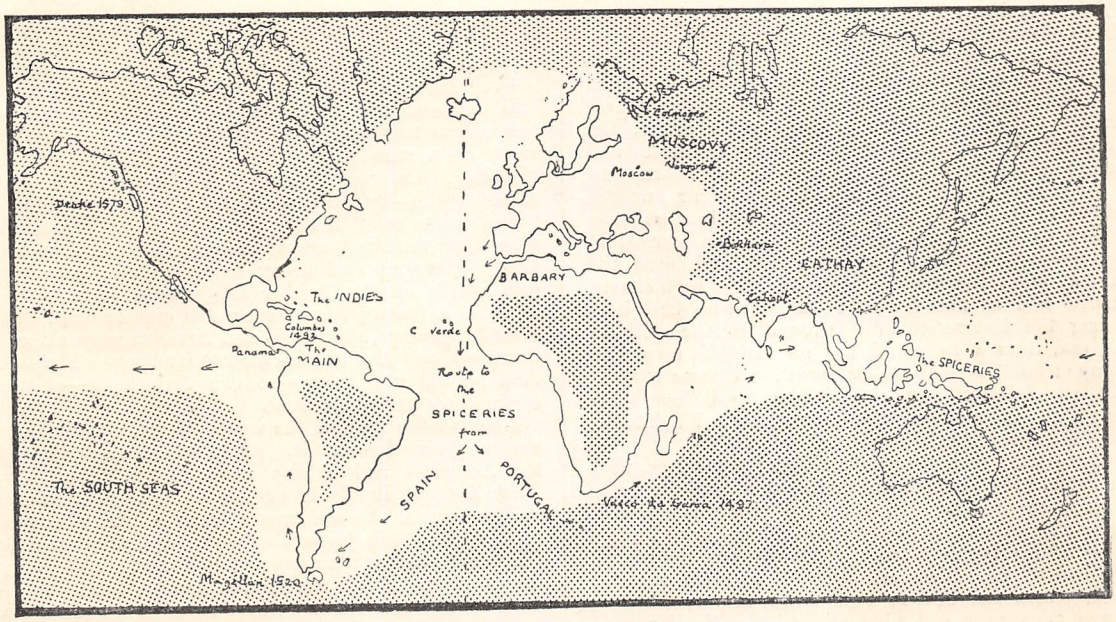
carried their knives in their teeth, and ropes in their hands. The knocking on the door was like thunder when they neared the *salon*.

'Shall we go in and silence them, Général Bibot?' asked Ram Chun, fingering his knife lovingly.

'No, no. Wait till the morning; the English will be here then—I heard the soldiers say so. I will keep guard with you here.'

'As you will, Général Bibot,' smiled Ram Chun.

All night the three dark sentinels stood against the door, listening, and Bibot, worn out with excitement, slept at their feet. In the grey light of morning, when



SKETCH MAP OF THE WORLD AS IT APPEARED ABOUT 1527.

[The shaded portions were practically unknown: China (Cathay) was known to exist, for example, but little more. The dotted line near the middle shows the division made by the Pope in 1493.]

the first streak of pale lemon was seen in the sky, Ram Chun heard the troops approaching. He sent his swift-footed companions to report.

Yes, it was right. A cloud of dust came along the white ribbon of road. In an hour they would be here. When the tramp, tramp, tramp of the tired feet came closer, Ram Chun woke Bibot. The little boy ran to what was left of the town gates. A young officer dashed forward on a motor-bicycle, and drew up suddenly.

Bibot stood very stiff and upright, and saluted. Then he said, 'Report to your Colonel these words, Monsieur: Bibot has retaken Aars from the enemy, and has six prisoners, including four generals, and two motor-cars.'

THE MUSCOVY MERCHANTS.

England's First Friendship with Russia.

I.—THE LITTLE OLD WORLD.

IF you draw on a map a straight line from Rome to Dublin, and then, with that line for a radius and Rome for a centre, describe a circle, you will have contained in that circle nearly all the world which was thought to be civilised in the year 1490. India and China were known to exist, for their merchandise came by long, slow journeys from the East into the houses of rich men in that little old European world; but of the distant countries themselves there was little but legend America was not discovered, though a few wise men guessed that in the far West of the Atlantic you might find land that would border on India, or perhaps be India itself. Nothing was known of Central or South Africa. The North African coast indeed was known, for there lived the dreaded Barbary pirates. Egypt, Palestine, Constantinople itself, the old eastern capital of Europe, were in the hands of the Turks, the enemies of Christendom. Russia, except that battlefield which Poland has been for centuries, and a little beyond, as far as Moscow, was only just coming into the knowledge of the civilised cities of Italy, France, and Spain.

On the edge of the circle lay Spain and Portugal, the countries which changed the old world. In 1492 Columbus discovered America, or rather, the West Indies; in 1497, Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Storms, which now we call the Cape of Good Hope. So began the great age of adventure by sea and land, when travellers' tales came true, and the road of romance lay open to the very gates of dawn or the home of the setting sun.

It was more than half a century before England began really to share in the hopes and ventures of that wonderful time. All things came to her a little late, for she was on the outer edge of the civilised world. But under the Tudors her merchants prospered and were bold in trade, her nobles saw other countries and learnt other men's wisdom, her seamen (as always) knew all the ways of the sea, so that she became what Milton later called her—'a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit . . . a city of refuge, the mansion house of liberty.'

The story of the Englishmen who journeyed to the West and fought the galleons of Spain has been told already. There was another story to be written a little later of those who ventured to the East by way of the Cape, and in the end set up English rule in India, in Africa, and long after in Australasia. But the story to be told here is of England's earliest friendship with the Tsar and people of Russia; and the first hint of it is in two letters written by a merchant of London, one to King Henry VIII., one to the English ambassador to the Emperor Charles.

This merchant, Robert Thorne, traded with Spain, and lived much at Seville, where always there was news of travel and discovery. As soon as Columbus made the Indies and the Spanish Main (the northern mainland of South America) well known, and Vasco da Gama reached Calicut, then the great port for spices, the merchants of Spain and Portugal sent out fleets and men to gather the riches of the new lands. Thorne and a partner ventured some one thousand four hundred ducats in one such enterprise, chiefly because they wished to secure that certain Englishmen, learned in map making, should go with the fleet and learn the navigation of the strange seas, and bring back charts. Thorne had in him from his father, who had been among the discoverers of Newfoundland, the spirit of the sea, though he could not go himself upon this voyage; but his map-makers went, and came back to him with charts that caused him to believe more strongly than ever that 'there is no land uninhabitable, nor sea unnavigable.'

These maps he sent to the ambassador, Dr. Ley, with his letter. He described the lands and seas of the world as they appeared to him, who in Seville was nearer to such knowledge than Englishmen at home or at foreign courts. He began by saying how vast was the wealth of the new countries, especially of those in the Far East, where the islands bore dates, cloves, nutmegs, cinnamon, pepper, and abounded with gold, diamonds, rubies, pearls, and jacynths; 'for we see where Nature giveth anything, she is no niggard.' And since things are precious or worthless according as they are rare or plentiful, in those rich islands the natives set more store by a knife or a nail of iron than by any quantity of gold.

Now, the Pope, continued Thorne, had in 1493 divided the undiscovered lands of the globe into two parts, one east, the other west, of a line drawn due north and south of Cape Verde (the line is dotted in the map). The two countries which had found or might find these places were Spain and Portugal. Spain was to have all the West, Portugal all the East: and, as Thorne saw, each country had secured her way to West or East by the knowledge and skill of her sailors. But the question who was to judge between them when East and West met—as Thorne thought they would at the Spice Islands, the East Indies—was a matter in dispute; and it seemed to the English merchant that if Spain and Portugal were to fall out, or if some other way to the Spiceries could be found, then yet another country—England—could hope for a share in the wealth and wonders of the islands.

But was there any way to be found? Spain, to go to her Western Indies, need but sail in the wake of Columbus; to come to the Spiceries she must either cross the Isthmus of Panama (already there was a settlement there) by land and sail on again, or she must round Cape Horn, which as yet only Magellan had done. Nevertheless, in spite of these hardships, Spain could reach the spice trade, and meet no enemy from Europe on the journey. Portugal, for her part, had the simpler road: she must pass the Cape of Good Hope, and, if need be, touching at the coast of the Persian Gulf (at Basra or Bussora, perhaps, where Sinbad went on voyages not more wonderful), cross the Indian seas to Calicut, and thus to Malacca and the sweet-scented islands. From there onwards, so it appeared, the coast ran north and east, and was little known.

Geographers in 1527 knew that the world was round. Yet in some fashion the spread of land and sea escaped them. They seem almost to have forgotten that a ball is round *all round*—not only at one circumference. Thorne knew that the Spice Islands were at the other side of the curved globe. He knew that they could be reached, so to speak, by following the equator east or west, as a man pleased. He knew also that if you travelled, so to speak, over the top or under the bottom of the globe—by either Pole, that is—you could likewise in time reach the islands. But he miscalculated altogether the distances north and south, and imagined that a journey past Norway, past the Pole, and down southwards on the further side, would be much the same as a journey more nearly due east or west. He thought, perhaps, that Asia and America were all one continent, and the North Pole not far beyond Norway. And he did not know—no one then knew—of the eternal ice of the Polar seas.

Look at the map of the world shown roughly as he was acquainted with it. Only the bare coasts of the Americas and Africa were known. Australia, New Zealand, hundreds of islands were still unseen and unnamed. Russia was a country which eastern traders touched in journeying along the oldest road in the world, the caravan route to Bokhara and Cathay: her coasts on the Baltic were not visited by English mariners. There was no city where now Petrograd stands. The White Sea and the icy shores beyond it were untouched: probably Thorne imagined that the sea turned south near that point. To an Englishman going north from London river the known lands were Flanders, Almaine (Allemagne: Germany), Denmark, and Norway, 'which is the highest part toward the North.' Beyond were uncharted seas: but, said Thorne valiantly, no sea is unnavigable, and 'if between our Newfoundlands, or Norway, or Iceland, the seas towards the north be navigable, we should go to the Spice Islands a shorter way.'

All this Thorne set forth in his letter to Dr. Ley; and in his letter to Henry VIII. he said the same, urging the King to put such a voyage in train, 'in the which without doubt your Grace shall win perpetual glory, and your subjects infinite profit.' He called his hope a 'foolish fantasy,' but for all this modesty he had great faith in it. He had risked his life to secure the maps, and send his secret knowledge to the King; so that when his time came, and he died, and was buried in the Temple Church in London, his epitaph did not lie—'always the common weal was his care, and his country was dearer to him than any riches.'

Never before, so far as is known, had an Englishman had this dream of a passage east or west by the Polar seas. It was a vision unfulfilled for many lifetimes. Within fifty years Englishmen were searching for a north-west passage in the reverse direction to that suggested by Thorne. Their search was vain; for three hundred years men of all races sought that passage, but none sailed through it before Amundsen, the Norwegian, who first also reached the South Pole. The North Pole likewise was not for an English voyager, nor for any man born within three centuries of Robert Thorne. His hoped-for North-East passage, like the North-West, was barred by walls of ice. Nevertheless men attempted it also. But instead of treasure at the journey's end, instead of the drowsy syrups and spicy breezes of the East, they found new friends and a new nation in the marshes and snow of Muscovy.

KELP.

IN bygone times the manufacture of kelp was one of the principal industries on the western coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and was almost as important as farming or fishing. Owing to various causes, kelp is not now so important as it was, but a little is still made in the Hebrides and in Orkney, and changes in trade and industry have lately caused more to be made.

Kelp is the ash obtained when seaweed is burnt. This ash is not very important in itself, though it is sometimes spread upon agr cultural land to make it more fertile; but a hundred years ago potash and soda were obtained from kelp, and as these materials were necessary in the manufacture of soap, glass, and some other useful things, kelp itself was valuable as a raw material: and it is still used for these purposes.

Great quantities of seaweed are thrown upon the western shores of Ireland and Scotland by the Atlantic storms, especially in exposed islands like the Hebrides and Orkneys. In bygone times this seaweed was carefully collected by the poor crofters and cottars, removed out of the reach of the tides as quickly as possible, and laid out to dry upon the fields. In many places a watcher lived by the shore, and when he saw the seaweed being cast up in great quantities, he hoisted a long streamer of it at the top of a pole as a signal to the farmers, their wives and children, to come and gather it before another tide could wash it away again. If there were no fortunate gifts of this kind from the stormy seas, the people had to cut the seaweed which was growing on the rocks laid bare when the tide went out; and this of course was a slower and harder task than gathering the loose seaweed strewn upon the shore.

In dry weather the seaweed spread upon the land was sufficiently dry for burning in about five days, and was then collected and taken to the kilns. If the weather were wet, and the seaweed was long on the ground, it lost some of its value, because the potash was washed out of it by the rain. A kelp kiln was little more than a floor, about ten feet long and three feet wide, surrounded by a little wall about a foot high. A quantity of straw or heather was laid on this floor, and the dried seaweed was piled over it like a huge pike of hay. The straw or heather was set on fire, and this fired the seaweed, which burned away with a good heat, the shape of the kiln aiding the draught of air somewhat as a flue would have done. At the end of six or seven hours the seaweed was consumed, and there remained a whitish mass of ash, often partially fused, or 'clinkered.' This was broken up, and was then ready for sale as kelp.

In the remote and wild districts, where the seaweed was gathered and burnt, nothing more could be done towards refining the kelp. It was necessary to convey it to some large centre of industry, where there were convenient works, plenty of fuel, and skilled labourers. As kelp was always manufactured near the coast, the cheapest and most convenient carriage was by sea, and at certain seasons of the year sailing vessels visited the islands and the little sheltered bays upon the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and collected the local supplies.

Kelp, when it arrived at the chemical works, contained a number of chemical compounds, such as potash, soda, and common salt, mixed up with a good deal of waste. The potash, soda, and other useful compounds were extracted by dissolving the kelp in hot water, running off the liquor, and alternately boiling it and allowing it to stand, so that the compounds might separate by evaporation and crystallisation, the processes being too complicated to describe in detail. The kelp contained very small quantities of iodine, and this was a very important fact, because kelp continued to be used as a source of iodine long after potash and soda were obtained in other ways.

About the year 1790, a great French chemist, named Leblanc, discovered a method of making soda from ordinary salt, which was much cheaper and yielded much larger supplies than the method of obtaining it from kelp. As soda was as good as potash for most industrial purposes, the new discovery threatened to destroy the kelp industry. But at that time we were at war with France, and as one means of raising the money for carrying on the war, a very heavy tax was placed upon salt. The tax varied from time to time, but from 1805 to 1823 it was fifteen shillings a bushel, and this heavy tax made salt forty times as dear as it would otherwise have been. Salt was, therefore, too dear to be used for the manufacture of soda until the tax was taken off. Though the Government made certain concessions to the makers of soda, Leblanc's invention was not practically used in England until 1823, when the salt-tax was reduced to two shillings a bushel. Shortly after that time the kelp industry began to decline, and would probably have ceased altogether, but for the manufacture of iodine.

EVENING ON THE DOWNS.

UPON the downs at Amberley,
Where trodden thyme most sweetly smells,
There came at eventide to me
The sound of fairy bells,
And following their cadence sweet
The march of fairies' feet.

What elfin hosts, I thought, are these
Who on the downs their marches keep?
But then I heard upon the breeze
The fretful cry of sheep,
And round the green hills into sight
The flock came, cloudy-white.

Behind them an old shepherd, grey
As the long shadows on the green,
Upon the parting steps of day
Came slowly and serene.
So Night, a shepherd grey and old,
Drives the bright hours to his fold.

* * * * *

Upon that picture of sweet peace
Another picture rose for me
Of just such gentle things as these
On downs not far from Amberley
Where night and day unceasing runs
The thundering message of the guns.

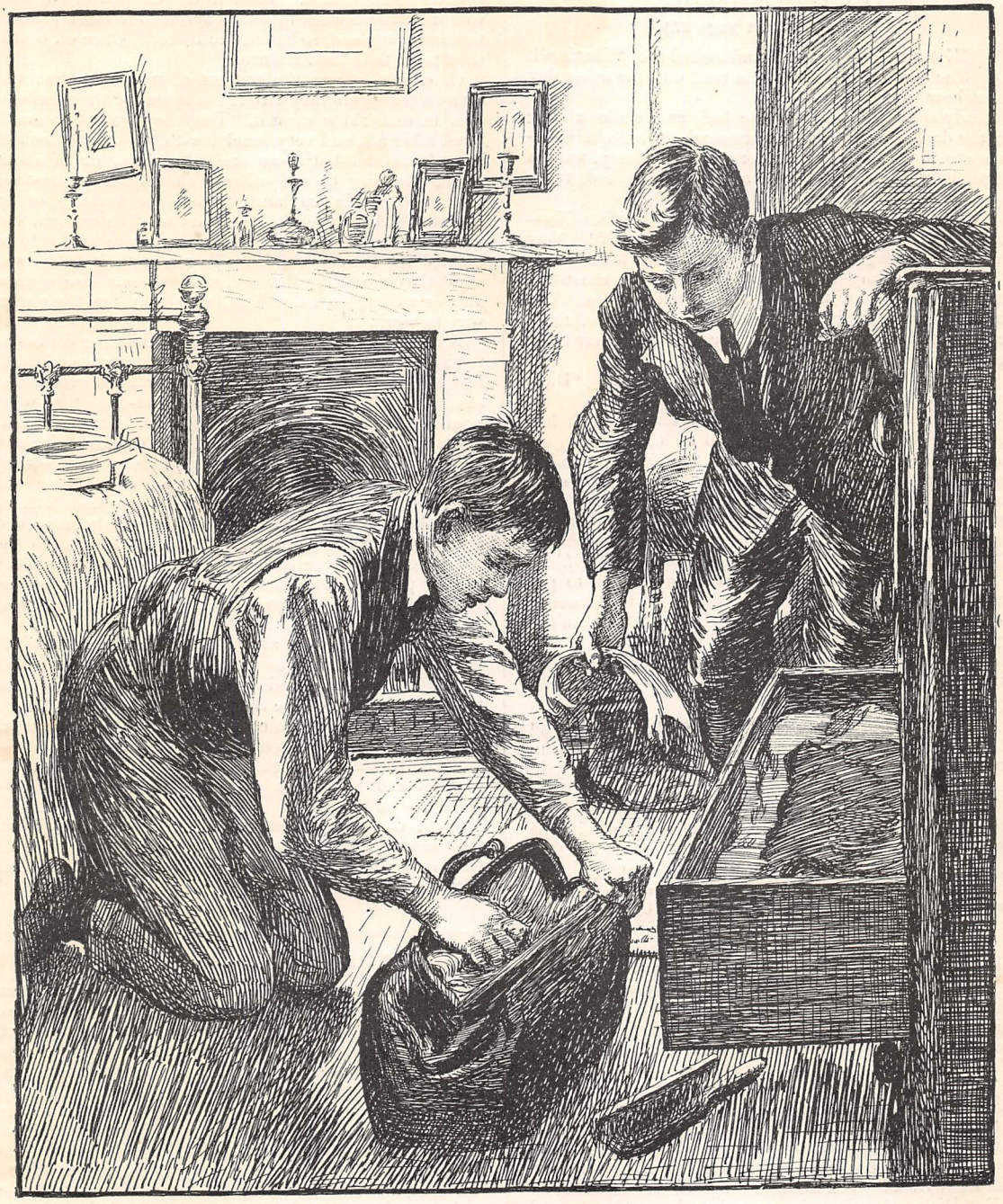
Another shepherd old and grey
Toils at a tyrant stranger's will,
I see him bow his head to pray
As curfew tolls from hill to hill,
And on the quiet evening air
My heart goes up with his in prayer.

E. B.

"I see him bow his head to pray
As curfew tolls from hill to hill."

CHATTERBOX.

SOLDIERS OF THE EMPIRE.



"The rest of the evening was spent in packing."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 27.)

DICK turned the last page and looked up. 'That's all. The end bit is what Uncle read out the other day about how to get there.'

Sandy slipped down from the bed, and made a dive for the darkest corner of the room where an old book-case stood. Presently he emerged, very dusty, with a large, flat volume, which he spread upon the bed, turning over the leaves quickly.

'Africa—North Africa ... that would be it. No—good luck! Here's a map of Morocco itself! Now we shan't be long, Dick! Come and have a look.'

'With a grimy finger Sandy traced the coast-line until he found the names of Rabat and Sallee. The two boys stared at the map in silence; somehow, those printed words seemed to make the story of their long-dead ancestor so much more real.

'There's the river, to the south,' Sandy said. 'Dick, we've only got to get out there!'

'We'd go along the bank of the river'—Dick had the little book open in his hand at the last page—'until we come to the end of the forest, then go due south for a whole day. And then, pretty soon, we'd find the saddle-back mountain and the very holy tomb ... There ought to be a jolly good chance of getting to the pit, and after that it would be easy—if the stone is still there—to find the treasure itself.'

'I expect there would be more than enough to pay the ransom for Father,' said Sandy hopefully. 'Enough to make us all very rich as well. I say, Dick, isn't it ripping?'

'We've got to get to Morocco first,' Dick reminded him, soberly. 'And that's not going to be easy.'

CHAPTER III.

For a moment Sandy sat silent, his arms hugging his knees, his eyes shining with excitement. Suddenly he spoke.

'It won't get any easier by waiting.'

'What do you mean?' Dick repeated his usual question slowly.

'Why, we'd better go at once—to-night—now!'

Dick gave a gasp, almost as though his younger brother's impetuous haste had left him breathless.

'To-night!' he repeated.

'Yes—why not? We've got some money to start with now. Later on, we shall have spent it.'

There was truth enough in what Sandy said to make Dick consider the question very seriously. Each of the boys had a little more than thirty shillings of the pocket-money which had been given to them at the beginning of term, when they had seemed so well off.

'Of course, that won't anything like pay our passages,' said the elder boy cautiously.

'I know that, but it would buy heaps of grub and things. We shall have to work our way out as sailors—like fellows in books do. Oh! don't shake your head like that, Dick! You *are* a beastly old wet blanket!'

But Dick was quite wise enough to know that he and Sandy, young and utterly inexperienced as they were, would have no chance as seamen. However, the alternative which he suggested was even more romantic, and Sandy caught enthusiastically at the idea.

They must stow away on some vessel bound to Morocco, and not show themselves until they were well away from land. Then if the captain of the ship would let them work in some capacity for their passage to the voyage end, so much the better. Once on board, they must take their chance.

Of course, it was the wildest of wild schemes; and many a time were they bitterly to repent of their foolishness in embarking upon it. But they were two small boys, after all, and very lonely, with no one to look to for advice and help—no one who cared much about them, one way or the other. They quite understood that their uncle and aunt wished for nothing better than to be rid of them. They said so often enough, and even if they did not mean it, the boys were hardly to be blamed for believing them. To rescue their father was what they must live for, and, since no one else seemed able or willing to help them, they must go their own way to work.

And if Dick and Sandy had any remaining doubts as to the wisdom of what they intended, they were laid to rest by the remembrance of what their head master had said to them when he bade them good-bye: 'Do what your father would have done under the circumstances.' That seemed conclusive enough, for Captain Harland had himself set out to look for the treasure, just as they were planning to do, and their object in doing so was surely a good one: nothing less than to save their father's life. Although their Head would certainly have disagreed with their interpretation of his advice, to the boys themselves the argument seemed unanswerable.

Very prudently, in their own opinion, the boys settled to wait until the morning before starting on their adventures.

'We'll go directly after breakfast,' Dick decided; 'then they won't miss us till lunch-time, and they won't bother much till a good bit later. We ought to be on board a ship long before then.'

The rest of the evening was spent in packing a bag with what they considered necessities for the voyage—a small allowance enough, for no boy worries about his clothes, and they took very little beyond what they stood up in.

With the strapped bag concealed beneath Dick's bed, they slept restlessly, dreaming of those future exploits which were to be even more wild in reality than in their excited imaginations.

(*Continued on page* 47.)

HERONS AND HERONRIES.

ONE of the largest birds which is still fairly common in this country, especially in the eastern counties, is the heron. It is a long-legged wading bird which finds its food, consisting of fishes, frogs, and water rats, in the shallow water of the margins of ponds and rivers. Being long-legged and also long and slender in the body, it must necessarily be long-necked, in order that it may reach, with its bill, the water in which it finds its food. The bird has also a long pointed bill, and this is a great advantage to it in several ways. It can, for instance, dip the point of its bill several inches into the water without submerging its eyes or the tiny holes through which it draws its breath. The heron's habit is to stand quite motionless in shallow water, watching for its prey. As soon as the latter comes well within reach, the heron shoots out its neck, seizes its victim in a moment, and

either flies off with it, or, if it is not too large, swallows it whole on the spot.

The heron has very large wings compared with the size and weight of the body. These wings, when extended, are very much 'cambered,' to use an aviator's term; that is to say, they are very much arched from front to back, and appear very hollow when viewed from below. This construction, coupled with the size of the wings, gives the heron a great and powerful grip of the air, and therefore the bird flies well and easily, moving its wings very slowly. It stretches out its long legs behind it, and these no doubt have a balancing and steadying influence. A tuft of feathers on the top of the head projects behind when the bird is on the wing; and, taken as a whole, the flight of a heron is at once striking and interesting.

Although the heron spends most of its time standing or wading alone in the water, it nests upon high trees, and, like the rook, it loves to build its nest in company with others. These groups of nests are known as heronries. Each nest is a rather flat group of sticks placed high in the tree. The heron's eggs are blue-green, and five or six are laid together.

The heron is a rather shy bird, and heronries are only to be found in places where the bird is free from molestation (there is one quite near London, in Richmond Park). Though they are nothing like so numerous as rookeries, heronries are fairly common in some parts of the country, especially in parks, where the owners give the birds protection. Waterton, the naturalist, who lived at Walton Hall, near Wakefield, tells us how a heronry was formed in his park as soon as proper protection was provided for the birds. In 1826, he says, the only places where herons were to be seen in the district around Walton Hall were Nostell Priory, a mile or two to the north-east, and Woolley Park, about the same distance to the south-west. At the former place there were five or six nests, and at the latter place there was one. In this year, Waterton finished the building of a wall round his park. The wall was three miles long, and as it had cost at least ten thousand pounds, Waterton had only been able to build it little by little, according to the amount of money which he could spare each year. In 1826, however, the wall was finished, and vagabonds and poachers were kept out of the park. In the following spring some herons came to Walton Park, and six nests were built. Year by year their numbers increased, and a naturalist who visited Walton in 1863 found nearly forty nests. Before this time, however, the herons had removed their quarters, though they had not left the park. One winter a wood-cutter was engaged to thin out the trees in the neighbourhood of the original heronry. In the following spring the herons deserted this place, and formed a new colony in an oak wood some distance away. Though they were so easily disturbed with regard to their nesting-place, the birds were far from timid when they were on the watch for prey, and a man could approach very near to them, if he only moved slowly and quietly.

How easily these birds are driven from their usual haunts is shown by the history of a heronry in Parham Park, Sussex. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, some herons were brought, by the steward of Lord Leicester, from Coity Castle, near Bridgend, in Glamorganshire, to Penshurst in the western part of Kent. A heronry was established, and for two hundred years the herons and their descendants stayed at Penshurst. Then they suddenly migrated to the other end of Sussex, and built their nests at Michel Grove, two or three miles east of Arundel. Some years afterwards, about 1845, some of the trees in which they had built were cut down, and thereupon the herons migrated northwards to Parham Park, a few miles away. The nests now number about sixty.

A hundred years ago, the largest heronry in England was said to be at Spalding. One of the largest at the present time is at Milton Park, in Northamptonshire, which, a few years ago, had one hundred and forty nests. Another one in this county is at Althorp Park, near Northampton. In Wiltshire there are heronries at Longleat, Bowood, Compton Park, Highworth, Fonthill, Savernake, and Longford Castle. There are two or three in Berkshire, including the one at Virginia Water, in Windsor Park. There are others in Lancashire, Devonshire, and other counties. W. A. Atkinson.

THE LOST STAR.

A STAR was lost
In the fields of the sky;
I heard old winds sob
And little winds sigh.

'Oh, where is my star
That shines so bright?
Where, where is my star?'
Sobbed old Dame Night.

And, 'Where is my star?'
Sighed the pool in the wood,
'That used to peep down
At my solitude?'

All the winds went a-search
Through dusk and through day,
But the lost star had wandered
Away and away. R. B. Ince

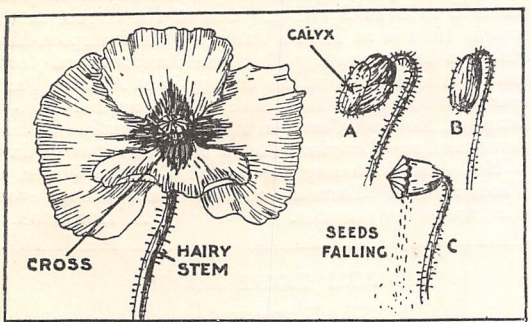
BRAVE ANTS.

OF course, the readers of *Chatterbox* do not need to be told that ants are marvellous little creatures, and that they can do all sorts of clever things. But all may not know that, by what is called the 'surface tension' of the liquid, ants can actually *walk on water!* They do not often attempt this dangerous feat—only in cases of absolute necessity.

A Mr. Willis, of the Botanical Gardens at Rio de Janeiro, witnessed an exceedingly interesting experiment of some ants. A fly-trap was baited with sugar, of which ants are very fond. The ants came in crowds, and carried off the sweet morsels. Then the trap was freshly baited, and placed on a cup set like an islet in the middle of a large plate filled with water. Again the ants trooped forth, but how tantalising they found it to be unable to reach the sugar! For a time, they walked round and round the rim of the plate, trying to discover some dry-land way of getting to the trap. At last, seeing that no other route was possible, they bravely launched themselves on the surface of the water. It took them only a few moments to reach their goal, and then, in a long, unbroken line, to return across the lake, each bearing with him his tiny share of the spoil.

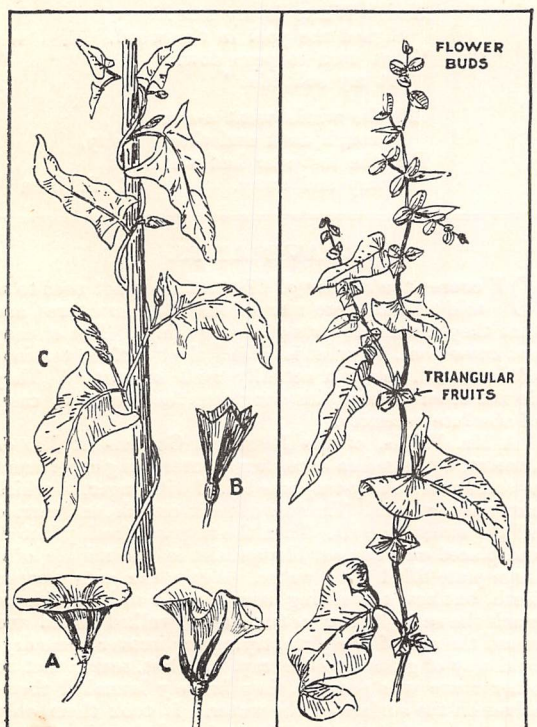
EYES THAT SEE:
THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.
II.—IN A CORNFIELD.

I HAVE come out on a lovely July morning, in order to visit a cornfield, and then tell you what I see of interest. Now let me say immediately that I did not go among the growing crops to find my flowers,



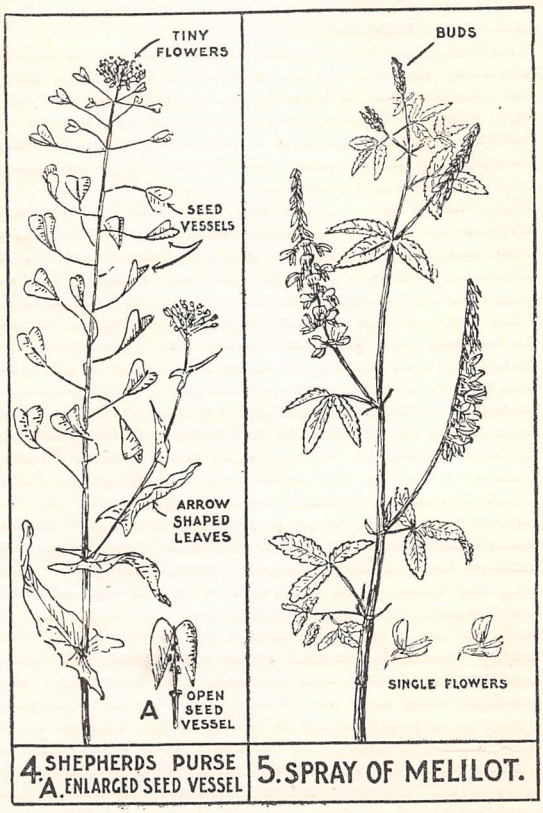
1. FIELD POPPY. A. CALYX BEING PUSHED OFF B. DROOPING BUD. C. DROOPING SEED VESSEL.

but walked by the side of the fields, where, sooner or later, you will find specimens of all the plants that grow further in. To walk *in* the crop does permanent damage to it, and you should *never* do such a thing nor allow others to do it.



2. CONVOLVULUS. A. OPEN FLOWER B. BUD. C. OPENING FLOWER. 3. SPRAY OF BUCKWHEAT IN FRUIT

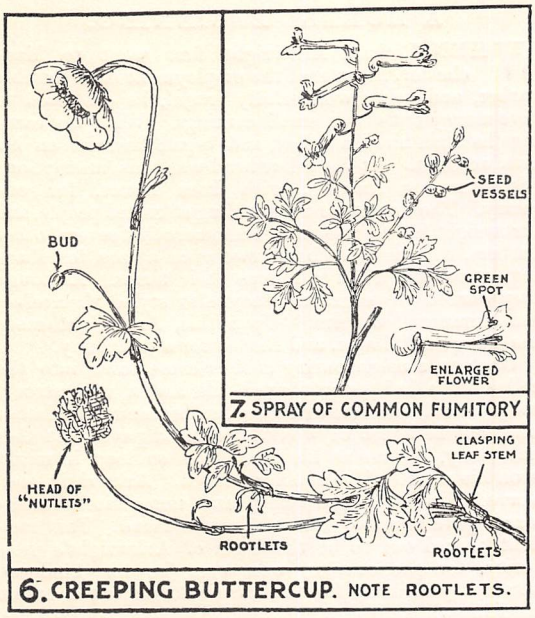
As I wandered across the fields the first thing that struck me was the *sound* of it. The wind is rather rough for a July day, and as it sweeps over these fields, making those 'waves of shadow,' the '*voice*' of the crop comes to me. With oats, it seems to sound like a lot of children all chattering far away in the distance; the 'voice' of the barley is softer, and seems to say 'hush, hu - - - sh!'; while the wheat has a deeper voice, and is more like the the sound of a huge whispering crowd of people, telling some news to one another. The sound rises and falls as the waves of soft breeze catch it. As I sit in a comfortable nook on a bank at the edge of a wheat-field, the voices come to me, and a lark, the only solo voice at the moment, drops to earth quite near



4. SHEPHERDS PURSE A. ENLARGED SEED VESSEL 5. SPRAY OF MELILOT.

to me. At one time I used to think a lark came straight down to his nest, and have often tried to find it by going to the spot where he landed. But the lark is not so foolish as that: he does not give away his address in that way, for he runs ever so far after he reaches the ground.

As I came through the fields I gathered specimens of all the flowers I saw, and I now have quite a collection about which to tell you. As I write, there is a beautiful scarlet Poppy growing by my side, almost touching my hand, as though asking to be brought to your notice; so let us begin with this. I was telling a friend the other day that I was intending to come to a cornfield to find flowers, and she said: 'But is there much else but poppies?' I should like to have her here now! As a matter of fact, there is not a single poppy in the oat and



7. SPRAY OF COMMON FUMITORY

6. CREEPING BUTTERCUP. NOTE ROOTLETS.

barley fields here, but the wheat is a blaze of scarlet with them. I was not going to say much about poppies, but I am reminded of several points of interest. Have you noticed that there are two kinds generally to be found? One has a black smudge at the base of each petal, and the other is of a clear scarlet throughout. Those smudges form a very pretty cross in the centre. I show you one in fig. 1. Then there is the quaint way in which the calyx (the 'sheath' of the petals) is pushed off (fig. 1, A): and how crinkled are the petals when released, looking as though no amount of ironing could smooth them! The buds, you know, droop; later on, the seed-vessel, in turn, bends down to help to discharge its seeds (fig. 1, B and C).

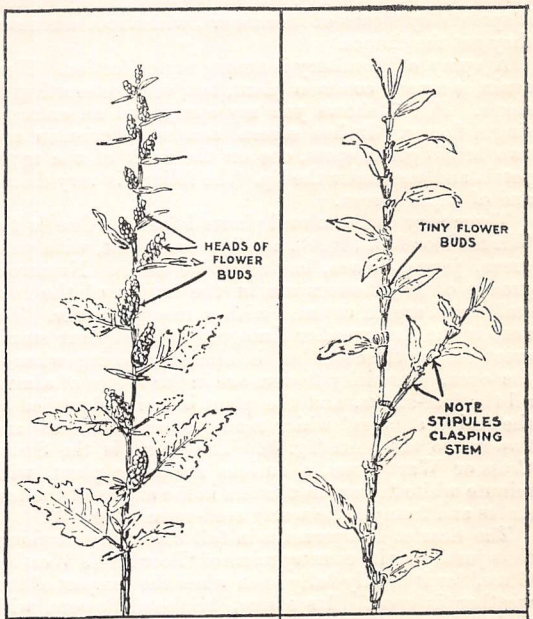
As in my hayfield, there are here tall plants of yellow flowers shaped like tiny dandelions, all members of the same family of Daisies.

In the barley I found lots of small Convolvulus (or lesser bindweed) climbing up the stems, as shown in fig. 2. This is a common little plant, but very interesting. First of all, do you know that it always twines round in the *same direction?* If you tried to twist it round the other way, it would in a few hours untwist itself and start again in its right direction. Then the flowers are interesting, with their beautiful shape and fine pink flushes pointing to the honey store (fig. 2, A); then, again, there is the compact and neat way the flower is folded in the bud (fig. 2, B), the coloured stripes on the *outside* being the parts visible in the twisted bud (fig. 2, C).

My next sketch is of Buckwheat (fig. 3), one of the daintiest flowers of a cornfield. It is very noticeable, with its arrow-shaped, yellow-green leaves and its numerous triangular flower-buds and seed-vessels, and its dainty little pink flowers. The whole plant is tinged with red: the stems, buds, seed-vessels, and even the veins of the leaves. It is a tough little plant; in fact, as a rule, it is easier to pull it up by the roots than to pluck a spray.

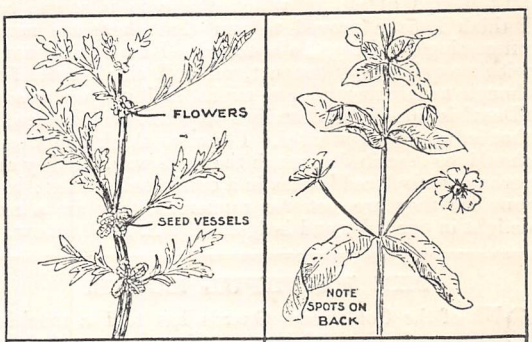
Yellow Medick is, of course, everywhere in company with Cat's-eye or Speedwell (Veronica), and some Bladder Campion, all of which I have already shown you in my first article.

The Shepherd's Purse I have here (fig. 4). A common plant, you will say! But have you ever given



8. WHITE GOOSE FOOT 9. KNOT WEED OR KNOT GRASS

it much attention? See its tiny white flowers, and note how, after flowering, the stem grows and the seed-vessels are on quite long stalks. The seed-vessels, too, are very large, compared with the tiny flowers that mothered them. The seed-vessels give the plant the



10. SWINE CRESS. 11. SCARLET PIMPERNEL

name of Shepherd's Purse because they are supposed to be shaped like the leather bags once used by country folks in which to keep their money.

In one field I saw, in the distance, waving sprays of yellow flowers. Finally, I found some close to the path, and it was Yellow Melilot, a very charming plant (fig. 5). It is not very common, but I have often seen it in these

fields. It belongs to the Pea family, and those one-sided trusses of bloom carry as many as forty-five or fifty flowers and buds of a glorious lemon-yellow. I have sometimes found a white variety which is even more beautiful.

A Creeping Buttercup is here, looking ever so bright among the stems. You see in my sketch (fig. 6) how it spreads by means of its runners, which root whenever they get the chance.

A spray of Fumitory is among my collection. Here again is a very common plant, but very interesting in shape. Fig. 7 shows you my spray, and an enlarged single flower. It has several shades of crimson and two bright green spots, one on the back of the upper petals and one under the lip. The foliage is very dainty and of a pale green.

Three very easily missed plants I found. One is the White Goosefoot (fig. 8), a rather tall plant, with pale-green, jagged leaves, having white backs. Numerous groups of tiny flowers are in the angles of the leaf-stalks and are all covered with a mealy powder. The next is the Knotweed or Knotgrass. This plant stands erect among the corn, but is almost creeping when in the open. Its pinky flowers are in the angles of almost all the leaf-stalks, and the plant is easily identified by the scaly 'stipules' which seem to bind the leaf and flowers to the stem (fig. 9). The third is the Swine Cress or Wart Cress, a curious spreading plant, with minute white flowers in clusters in the angles of the leaf stalks and funny little warty seed-vessels (fig. 10).

The Scarlet Pimpernel is in full bloom this morning, thus justifying its country name of 'Poor Man's Weather Glass,' for it is only fully open when the prospect of fine weather is good. Its starry, brick-red flowers, with their black centres, are quite a feature, small as they are (fig. 11). Have you ever noticed that the backs of its leaves are covered with tiny brown spots or splashes?

There is plenty of Wild Chamomile (a daisy-like flower, with leaves so divided that they are like thread), Groundsel, and several Thistles. This, I think, completes the chief flowers I found. Of course, *you* may find others, for the flowers of a cornfield are largely governed by the kind of soil in which the crop is sown; but I think I have proved to you that there are many interesting specimens to be found. I am taking home with me quite a gay bouquet, which I think beautiful, though unthinking people might call it 'just *weeds*.' 'Dust' is sometimes described as 'matter misplaced': that is, where not wanted. I always think that weeds should be described in much the same way, for they are perhaps 'misplaced' when in a cultivated garden; but, provided they are not *too* numerous, they are a real delight in our fields and hedges. E. M. Barlow.

THE FAITHFUL HORSE.

ONE of the Coldstream Guards has told a touching story of a faithful horse. After the fierce fighting at Loos, a horse was observed standing between the firing lines. For two days he remained there. Then some of the British soldiers crawled out to him, and found that he was standing by the dead body of his former rider. The horse was unharmed, but would not quit the spot. The men had to leave him there, but by-and-by some very bravely went to him again. Still they could not induce him to move, until at last they blindfolded him, and so led him back to the British lines.

A HUMBLE BEGINNING.

WHEN Richard Arkwright first went to Manchester, he entered the employment of a humble barber, and being wonderfully frugal, he contrived to save money out of his small earnings. With his earnings he then hired a cellar, and began business on his own account. At the cellar head was this inscription: 'Subterranean shaving, with keen razors, for one penny.' The novelty of the wording attracted people, and Arkwright had soon so many customers that several other barbers, who used to charge twopence apiece for shaving, were compelled to reduce their terms. Although *they* worked above ground, they also styled themselves 'subterranean' barbers. Upon this, Arkwright made his charge still lower, and shaved for a halfpenny.

One day, a neighbouring cobbler came down into the cellar for a halfpenny shave. He had a very strong, rough beard, and Arkwright, when beginning to lather him, said he hoped he would not mind paying another halfpenny, because as his beard was so long it might spoil his razor. The cobbler refused. Arkwright then shaved him for a halfpenny, and immediately afterwards gave him two pairs of shoes to mend. This incident turned out to be the basis of Arkwright's prosperity, for the cobbler, won over by his kindness, obtained permission for the barber to inspect a cotton machine which had been invented by a friend of his. Arkwright took an interest in the plan, and consequently began a career of success.

A TAILOR AND HIS GOOSE.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, the poet, was a very awkward rider. A wag met him one day riding along the road, and noticing his uneasy manner in the saddle thought he would have a little fun at his expense. 'Young man,' inquired the wag, 'did you meet a tailor on the road?' 'Yes, I did,' the poet replied, 'and he told me that if I went a little further, I should meet his goose.' W. A. Atkinson.

THE MAKING OF MICHAEL.

JOHN MARKHAM was the centre of attraction one morning, at the village school. He stood in the midst of an eager, excited group of boys and girls, talking rapidly himself, and being interrupted every now and then by one or other of the children.

'You'll be sure to invite me, Johnnie,' said Emma Mills.

'And me—and me—and me,' cried several voices, and Johnnie nodded yes to each.

'Oh! yes, I shall ask you all: Father and Mother both want me to have a real big party, because I'm twelve, and the eldest. So you can all come, for we shall have it in the home field. My cousins from Frensham are coming too; and Sam and Claud Smith, because they are staying at their grandfather's; and——'

'And Michael Brent?' queried a little girl who had not spoken before.

There was a dead silence for a second or two, and then a chorus of negatives—'No, no, not Michael; nobody wants him. We don't like Michael.'

'Why not?' It was the same rather timid voice; and two or three of the elder scholars turned, and looked with surprise at the speaker.

'Well, Gracie Burns! whatever makes you take Michael's part? You know as well as we do that no one likes Mike.'

Grace screwed up all her courage; she was younger than most of the rest, and not much used to making herself heard. 'I only want to know why,' she said. 'Michael is strange to us all; and he's poor, and lives in a little poky house. I know that; but it's no reason for not liking him—and keeping him out of everything.'

John took up the tale—'It's not because he's poor; you know that very well, Grace. We shouldn't mind that. But he's cross and sulky; never speaks unless he's spoken to; and looks black all the while. A fellow has no need to be like that, whatever happens. *I* shan't ask him.'

Grace said no more, but she went away feeling very sorry for the black-browed, black-haired boy, who perhaps did not know how particularly sulky he looked, when he knitted his brows, and cast down the long lashes of his eyes, and stood all by himself, while the others were at play.

The birthday party was held in the holiday time: and Michael was not there. Grace did not see him again until one morning more than a week after the party. She was feeding her white rabbit, on the grass at the side of the house, when a shadow fell across the sunshine, and showed that some one was standing by the iron railings. It was Michael; the black look was gone from his face, and he was gazing intently at Grace's pretty pet.

'I used to keep rabbits,' he said, without any sort of greeting, as the little girl looked up.

'Oh! did you? How many, Michael; and what colour were they?' she asked, with much interest.

'A grey one and a buff one!' answered Michael; 'but they're gone! Almost everything is gone now.'

Grace did not know what to say; but she slipped her hand through the railings, and patted Michael's brown hand very gently; and looked at him with pitying eyes.

Then Michael, who for so long had kept his troubles to himself, felt his tongue loosened by her kindness, and poured out his tale of grief. 'Father died,' he said. 'And then they found the money was all gone; and there was none for Mother and me. Then Mr. Ranford who lives at Frensham, not far from here you know—he's a sort of uncle to me; at least he's Mother's uncle—said he had got the little house in the lane here, and we could have it to live in. He said Mother could come to his office every day, and do typewriting, and get money for it. So she does; but it leaves me by myself; and when she's at home she is nearly always working, or else crying for Father.'

'Oh! poor Michael,' said Gracie. 'And you haven't a brother; you are an only one, like me.'

'I've never had a brother or a sister,' answered Michael. 'And the boys here don't like me. But I shouldn't have minded that so much if they had let me keep my rabbits.'

Grace looked puzzled. 'They—do you mean the boys?' she wanted to know.

'No, I mean Uncle Ranford and the others who settled things up for us.'

'Well,' said Grace, after a pause, 'you can come and see mine. Come to the railings; I'm here every morning; and you can bring them some dandelion and sow-thistles, if you like.'

Every day Michael came, and he did not fail to bring an armful of green-stuff for the bunnies. He and Grace soon became very good friends, and before long Mrs. Burns, Grace's mother, noticed him.

'Who is that child you talk to at the railings, Grace?' she inquired. 'Is he poor Mrs. Brent's boy?'

'Yes,' said Grace. 'Michael Brent; you don't mind, Mother, do you?'

'Oh, no!' replied Mrs. Burns. 'He seems a quiet lad enough, and very fond of your bunny. You can ask him to come in and play, the day your cousin Claud comes.'

Claud Smith, not being one of the village boys, was quite disposed to be friendly with Michael, and the three children played together very happily.

Michael was both surprised and pleased when Mrs. Burns asked him to stay to tea.

'As though I had been one of the others,' he said to himself, and he answered Grace's kind mother, when she asked him questions, as readily as he had talked to Grace.

'Your mother is away all day, I suppose?' asked Mrs. Burns.

'Yes, ma'am,' said Michael; 'it is too far for Mother to come in the middle of the day. She has to walk a good way, and then take the tram, and then it is late to get home in the evening, after six always.'

'How do you manage?'

'Oh! I do pretty well,' said Michael. 'Mother leaves me some sandwiches.'

So she did, and it was one of the things the boys had against Michael, that he never ate his lunch in the morning play-time, as they did. They did not know that Michael's lunch was his dinner too—carefully kept till he could get away into some corner and eat it; and then wait till his tired mother came home to make tea in the evening.

Meanwhile the early tea at Mrs. Burns's was a great treat, and it came pretty often, for that good woman was sorry for the lonely boy, and when she found that he had no bad words or ways, was glad to let him come. By-and-by they found out how clever Michael was with his hands, for he offered to make a new hutch for the rabbit, of which it was sadly in need. Though there were only some old pieces of wood and a bit of wire netting to make it, the hutch was a very nice one when finished. Claud Smith, coming over just when it was done, to stay at his grandfather's again, was much struck with Michael's work.

'I could never have done it,' he said. 'I shall bring my big brother Sam to look at it.'

Then Claud went down to the school, and told Johnnie Markham and all the others how mistaken they had been about Michael. 'He's really a capital sort, when you know him,' said good-natured Claud. 'And he has made Gracie a famous rabbit-hutch out of next to nothing.'

Being with Grace and Claud had done Michael a world of good, and not in vain had Mrs. Burns been so kind to him. The boy's own sorrowful and weary-hearted mother began to notice the change in him, and to feel a little cheered for the first time since grief had overwhelmed her life. Though it seems a great deal of good to come from so small a cause, I believe the real reason why Michael Brent grew up to be a happy and successful man, instead of a gloomy and miserable one, was that Grace Burns on a far-off summer day had felt the sweet stirrings of love and compassion towards him in her own kind little heart.

C. J. Blake.

"He was gazing intently at Grace's pretty pet."

"Dashing into the group, she cried, 'How dare you, you cowards!'"

GLADYS' FAIRY GODMOTHER.

'WHAT a queer little old lady that is over there!' said Ethel Johnson to her great friend, Gladys Harrison, as they were going to school, pointing to an old lady on the opposite side of the road, who was limping along with a stick, and carrying a large basket on one arm.

'Yes, isn't she?' returned Gladys. 'She lives next door to us in that little house, with the high wall all round it. She has a lovely white Persian cat. I have seen it sitting on the wall. I think she looks just like the fairy godmother in a story, don't you? I should like to speak to her. Father says she is "eccentric," but I think she looks very lonely, poor old lady!'

The conversation turned to other subjects, and then the Grand Fancy Ball was mentioned, which was to take place at the Town Hall in a fortnight's time. It was held annually by the mayor and mayoress, and it was considered a great honour to be invited.

'What are you going to wear?' asked Ethel. 'I have got a lovely gipsy dress, and there is to be a prize for the prettiest costume.'

'I know,' said Gladys; 'but,' she went on gloomily, 'I shan't be able to go, because Mother can't afford to buy me a dress. I know they are awfully hard up this winter.'

'Oh! I am so sorry,' said Ethel, sympathetically. 'You must be disappointed.' Then she added, 'Why don't you ask your fairy godmother for one?'

Gladys laughed. 'I should have to do something to earn it,' she said. 'They always do in the stoires. But there aren't such things as fairies, nowadays.'

Here some more girls joined them, and the subject dropped. When they came out of school it was raining heavily, and Gladys and her friends hurried along, anxious to get home. Presently Gladys saw her little old lady over the road, hobbling along, and said to her friends, 'Look at the poor thing! she'll be drenched, and that basket looks so heavy. I'll offer her my umbrella,' and off she ran, much to the amusement of the others, who laughed and made loud remarks about 'goody Gladys' and 'currying favour.' However she took no heed, though her cheeks burnt hotly.

'Thank you, my dear,' said the old lady, when Gladys shyly offered her assistance. 'I am glad to find one courteous child among so many ill-mannered ones. Little girls are not what they were in my young days.'

Gladys walked with her to the little green door in the wall which surrounded the old lady's house, and then handed her the basket. The white Persian cat sat on the top of the wall washing herself, but jumped down when the old lady called: 'Badroulboudour, come down, my beauty! She is my pet,' she said, turning to Gladys. 'I once had a little girl like you, but she died when she was fourteen, and Badroulboudour has been my little daughter ever since. If I lost her now, I think it would kill me.'

After this the child and the old lady became firm friends. Many times did Gladys help to carry the heavy basket, and many tales did her quaint little friend tell her of the foreign countries she had seen, and of the little dead daughter, who, she said, had been dark like Gladys, and had had such pretty manners. Then one day, as Gladys was passing the little green door, it was pulled violently open, and the little old lady herself appeared, wringing her hands and looking very much distressed.

'My child, Badroulboudour is lost!' she cried. 'My pet! my beauty! my treasure! she has been stolen! she is gone! what shall I do?' Then, in a pleading tone: 'You will find her—you will—I know you will. You are the only friend I have.'

Gladys was rather bewildered by this outburst, but said she would try and do her best, and hurried on. During lesson-time she could not help thinking of the poor old lady's loss. The only creature she had to love! How nice it would be if she could find poor pussy and restore her to her mistress. But how? She must have been stolen. How could she possibly find her?

Time passed on, and the day of the great ball arrived. Gladys had seen no more of her fairy godmother, and the pussy had not turned up as far as she knew. She dawdled about miserably all the morning, only wishing she had had to go to school. Her mother felt very sorry for her disappointment, and in the afternoon, thinking the child would be happier if she had something definite to do, sent her to the other end of the town, with a basket of good things for a poor old charwoman.

Gladys started off quite willingly, glad to be of use, and determined to forget her disappointment. She visited Mrs. Brown, gave her the good things, talked cheerfully to her, admired her cat, and then took leave.

It was now quite dark, and she walked quickly along towards home, until, passing through a mean little street, she saw a group of boys, shouting and laughing round some object she could not see. Then she heard a pitiful 'miaouing,' and her blood rose. Dashing into the midst of the group she cried: 'How dare you, you cowards! Bullying a poor cat!' and, seizing the creature in her arms, she proceeded to examine it by the light of a gas-lamp. Its yellow eyes gleamed at her, and she caught her breath. The poor thing's fur was tangled and dirty, but unmistakably white, and though thin and starved-looking, it was sure enough a Persian.

'Badroulboudour!' whispered Gladys, excitedly. There was an answering 'miaow' and a feeble wag of the bushy tail.

That was enough! Popping the recovered treasure into her basket, the girl started off, full speed, for Ivy Cottage. On her way she passed the Town Hall, brilliantly lit, and looking very festive, but for the moment the ball was forgotten. The excited child reached the little green gate in the wall, and hurried up the path. At the first peal of the bell, the little old lady herself appeared, and, seeing Gladys, invited her in.

Badroulboudour, finding herself at home at last, yawned, stretched, and, without any surprise, jumped straight into her mistress' arms.

The poor old lady was quite overcome with joy and gratitude. She wept a few tears, and then begged Gladys to tell her all that had happened. The child did so, glad that the old lady was happy once more, and then turned to go.

'Nay, my child,' said her old friend, 'you shall not go without a reward. Tell me what you would like best. Pretend I am a fairy and can give you whatever you wish with a wave of my wand. Come, child—what shall it be?'

Gladys laughed. 'I want a dress to go to the Fancy Ball in,' she said. 'But you can't give me that.'

'Go home,' ordered the old lady, sharply: 'go home, and trust to me.'

The child went home surprised and amused, and told the whole adventure to the family at tea-time.

'I shouldn't reckon on a promise like that,' said her brother. 'I think she's a bit mad.'

'Of course I'm not going to,' said Gladys. But even as she spoke there was a loud knock at the front door, and the maid brought in a large box for 'Miss Gladys.'

With trembling fingers the child opened it, and drew out the articles it contained.

Brocade, silk, and satin, fine old lace, and soft ribbons composed a toilette so old-fashioned and so charming that it might have been taken from an old picture. Silk stockings, buckled shoes, mob-cap, and lace mittens, all complete. Everything smelt deliciously of lavender and pot-pourri, and seemed to have come out of another world. In a little leather case lay a beautiful cameo locket, surrounded by brilliants, and hung on a slender golden chain. On a card was written: 'These were my dear Elizabeth's. In token of an old woman's undying gratitude. For the little Cinderella.'

It was not long before Gladys was dancing merrily at the Fancy Ball, where, to crown her happiness, her dress was voted the best in the room, and won the prize of a beautiful enamelled watch.

As she tumbled very sleepily into bed, she murmured: 'The days of fairies are not gone, after all. She was my fairy godmother.' M. E.

TIT FOR TAT.

DEAN SWIFT, being about to take a ride, called for his boots. The servant brought them uncleaned. 'Why have you not blacked them?' the Dean asked. 'I thought it was useless to black them, because they will soon be splashed with dirt,' the man replied.

In a little while the same servant asked his master for the key of the pantry. 'Why do you want it?' the Dean asked. 'I wish to get some breakfast,' the man answered. 'Oh!' said the Dean with a significant glance, 'what is the use of having breakfast? You will be hungry again two hours hence.' W. A. ATKINSON.

WARNED IN TIME.

'HARK, dear!' said Mr. Partridge to his gentle little wife,
'I hear a mower with his scythe—the terror of my life.

'They've cut the oats and barley, and that lovely field of rye,
And now they've come to cut our wheat, so we shall have to fly.

In here all through the summer-time quite sheltered we have been,
Low down among the stalks of wheat, where we could live unseen.

The flowers help to screen us, and we scuttle in and out,
While not a soul can see us from the pathways round about.

Now all the corn is carried from the other fields around,
And the men who do the cutting always make that funny sound.

They rub a stone upon the scythe; I think they mean to warn
Not only us, but others, they are coming for the corn.'

Said Mrs. Partridge,
'Let us go
Before the reapers
Come to mow.'

A Harvest Mouse was running up the corn-stalk overhead—
He listened with attentive ear to what the Partridge said.

Then running down without the grain which he had meant to eat,
He called his little wifie from another ear of wheat.

Quickly with terror in his face he told her all he knew.
She nodded 'Yes,' and sagely said, 'I fear it must be true.

As soon as all the corn is ripe they come and cut it down—
They take it all away, I know, soon after it is mown.

My mother as a baby was taken in the nest,
When the corn was cut and carried, far away from all the rest.

Her sisters all were frightened, but contrived to run away—
She could not move through terror, I have often heard her say.

So we must move
Away from here
To other quarters—
That is clear!

Let's go and fetch the children. 'Tis time they learnt to run.
Oh, make them come directly, and be sure *we* don't leave one.'

In a bushy, prickly thistle, growing in amongst the wheat
Was the nest, a work of wonder, like a ball so round and neat.

Seven children, strong and lively, crowded in that tiny ball—
All began to play and struggle when they heard their mother call!

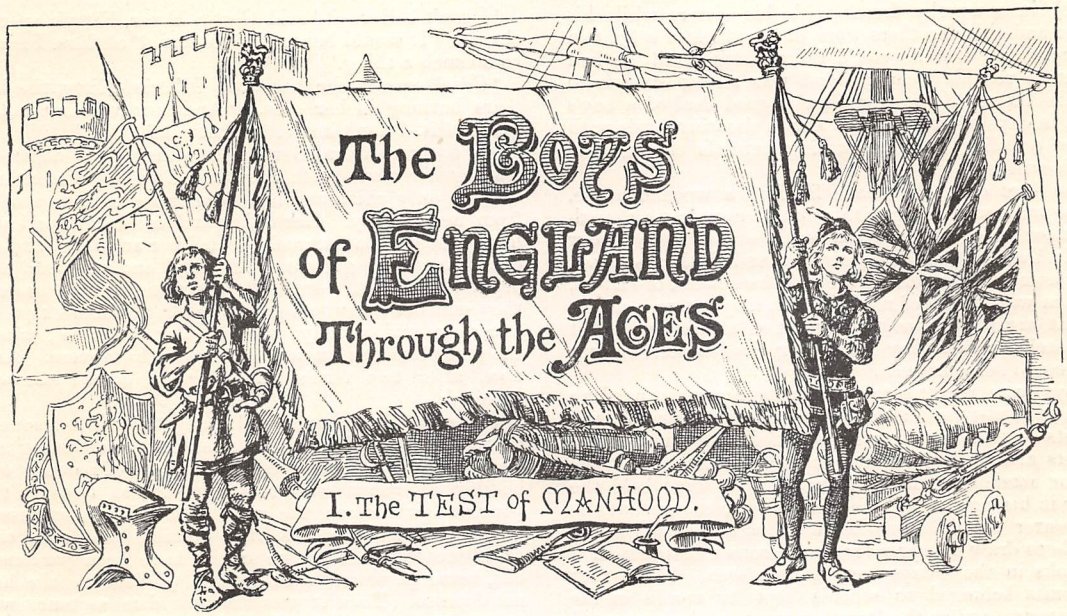
'Little ones,' said Mother Mousie, 'we must get away from here;
Men are cutting down the corn, and they will take our nest, I fear.

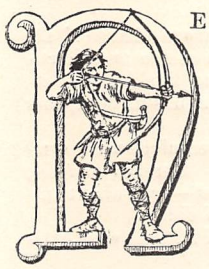
All of you must follow quickly; you are old enough to come;
Warned in time by Mr. Partridge, we will find a safer home.'

Out they trooped with eager hurry; left the field that very day;
Ere the Harvest Moon had risen, Harvest Mice were far away.

So all were safe
Before the morn
When reapers came
To cut the corn.

"'Hark, dear!' said Mr. Partridge to his gentle little wife,
'I hear a mower with his scythe—the terror of my life.'"





EARLY eleven hundred years ago the people of this country became a nation. They were united then under one head, although in all probability they did not realise it. The people of each village acknowledged the supremacy of a 'lord,' but they knew little of the 'over-lords,' who were superior to the lords, and still less of the king, who ruled the over-lords, and so called himself 'King of the English.'

During those eleven hundred years Englishmen have had many different ideals. Prowess in war, chivalry, scholarship, gallantry, wealth, world-power, and liberty have been in turn the chief aims of the best and cleverest men of the nation. And these men trained their sons according to their own ideals. In Early English days a boy ceased to be treated as a boy as soon as he could play a man's part in battle. Boys of the Middle Ages were trained for knighthood, or for life as yeomen or merchants. When the desire for great learning flooded the country after the Renaissance, boys of thirteen learnt to write verses in Latin and to argue in Greek. When the Stuart Cavaliers bowed low before their ladies, boys were taught all the devices of gallantry.

So a boy becomes a man as soon as he can follow his father. The test of manhood has always been, and always will be, the skill and strength to do a man's share in the work of the world, whether that work—according to the ideals of the time—be scholarship, or money-making, or fighting.

In the days, then, of the beginning of the English nation, the test of manhood was the power to wield a sword or cast a spear. There were no big manufacturing towns at that time, and as the country roads were few and rough, trading with other villages was practically impossible, and each settlement had to provide itself with all necessaries. Clothes and weapons had to be made, houses to be built, cattle to be tended, and wheat and barley to be grown.

In the midst of these peaceful occupations, the people might at any moment be interrupted by news of the landing of pirates, who came in black galleys from Norway and Denmark, rowed up rivers, or landed on the coast of Essex and Kent, and marched inland, burning villages, plundering monasteries, killing men, and taking women and children to be sold as slaves.

"Hunting animals through the woods with spears."

The moment news of this sort arrived, the 'lord' set out to defend the village, and all the men took up sword, and bow, and spear, and went with him to battle. Meanwhile the women and children fled into the thick forests which then covered the country, to hide until the danger was past. Naturally no boy was satisfied to

crouch in a marshy forest with his sisters while his father and elder brothers were in the thick of a fight in his defence. But he could do nothing until he had learnt to use his weapons, and was strong enough to handle them. So it was that a good deal of a boy's time, in days of peace, was spent in shooting birds with arrow or sling, and in hunting animals through the woods with spears.

The lord of each village lived in a wooden house, whose walls were hung with coloured curtains, although the floor was only covered with straw. The poorer people lived in a village grouped round the lord's house, their homes being built of a rough framework of rafters, filled in with daubs of mud. To eat, they sat on benches, and at night they took straw out of a chest and put it into sacks, which they laid along the benches, so that they could serve as beds.

Boys were required to wait on their parents, handing them at meal-times dishes of bread, beans, or meat, and goblets—either of gold or horn—filled with wine. These goblets always had covers, and while a man drank, the boy or attendant who had brought the wine held the cover in his right hand, the idea being to ensure that the cup-bearer should have his hand occupied, and so be unable to draw a dagger for treacherous assassination.

Books in those days were seldom seen. Those that did exist belonged to schools kept by monks in the monasteries, and as the Danish pirates in their repeated inroads always burnt monasteries to the ground, both schools and books were fast dying out. It was only in later years, after Alfred the Great had driven the invaders from the country, that the schools were rebuilt, and King Alfred ordered that every boy should be taught to read, and should 'abide at his book till he could well understand English writing.' So boys went to school to learn reading and writing, and the beginnings of Latin Grammar; and singing was also taught in these monastery schools, in order that the boys might sing at church.

Pears, apples, and figs, which grew abundantly in England, were occasionally given as prizes, but the more usual way of encouraging scholarship was flogging. If a boy was dull, he was beaten to make him clever; if he was clever, he was beaten nevertheless because the monk who was his schoolmaster hoped by that means to drive into him an extra amount of knowledge in proportion to his powers of learning. Indeed, flogging was so frequent that when a man spoke of his boyhood, he called it 'the days when I was under the rod.'

No indoor games were known in those days, except a variety of draughts, and even that was only played by the over-lords and the men immediately around them. For the boys who lived in villages, running, jumping, and the use of weapons were the only sports, and all led to the attainment of strength and skill which in later years would be put to good use in battle.

EXPELLED.

'I'M expelled, expelled! Isn't it an awful word? I feel as if it would ring in my ears till the day I die!'

'Kitty!' Half-a-dozen voices uttered the name in startled dismay, for Kitty Carruthers, in spite of her wilful ways and quick, impulsive temper, was possessed of many characteristics which endeared her to her schoolfellows.

'I can't believe it,' said Gertie Fryer, Kitty's special chum. 'It would be simply too cruel of Mrs. Fielder to do such a thing.'

'Cruel or not, she has done it,' cried Kitty, the hot tears burning in her eyes. 'And how to bear the disgrace of it, I don't know. What *shall* I do?'

At a signal from Gertie, the other girls departed, leaving her alone with her friend. Kitty Carruthers was an only child, and had been more or less spoiled from her infancy. Her father and mother, who loved her devotedly, had scarcely denied her anything, and, in consequence, she grew up self-willed and wayward to a degree. At last, her faults becoming very apparent, they sent her away to a good boarding school (kept by a certain widow lady, Mrs. Fielder by name), where the discipline was known to be somewhat severe. And now, after two terms, the end had come: she was expelled.

Repeated disobedience had brought her into frequent trouble with the Head Mistress, but the crowning act of wrongdoing had been to slip out of bounds one holiday afternoon and row herself and two of the younger girls down the river. Had Kitty expressed sorrow for her misdeeds, it is possible that even this great breach of discipline might have been pardoned, but, being possessed with a spirit of defiance, she had not done so. Thus it was that the dire sentence was pronounced, and Kitty Carruthers was to be sent home in disgrace.

'What would I not give for one more chance!' she said, with a heart-broken sob, as soon as she and Gertie were alone together. 'But there's no likelihood of it; Mrs. Fielder is like adamant when she has made up her mind.'

'Kitty, dear,' Gertie's voice was tremulous with sympathy, 'don't give up hope like this. Surely *something* can be done? If I were you, I'd just—pray about it.'

'What would be the good of it if I did?'

'Oh, I feel sure good would come of it,' said wise little Gertie.

'*Sure*—are you really?' questioned Kitty.

'Yes,' was the unhesitating answer, 'quite sure.'

'Then I will,' said Kitty. And she did.

* * * * *

That night sleep was far from Kitty's eyelids. Ten, eleven, twelve o'clock struck, and still she was wakeful, a prey to unhappy thoughts.

'Oh, if Mrs. Fielder would only forgive me this once,' she said to herself in the darkness, 'I would be such a different girl. I wonder if she would, if I begged her very, very hard.'

It was just at this point of her meditations that Kitty's attention was aroused by a movement in the room, and, looking round, she saw that from the further end of the long dormitory a little girl was making her way towards the door near Kitty's bed. A bright moonlight revealed two facts to the watcher: namely, that the girl was Norah Fielder, the Head Mistress's little daughter, and that she was walking in her sleep.

More than once the child had been known to do such a thing, therefore Kitty was not so startled as she would otherwise have been.

Realising that it would be very unwise to suddenly awake the sleeper, Kitty slipped out of bed, in order to keep guard over her movements.

The door being unfastened, the little sleep-walker made her way along the passage, Kitty following.

Norah next mounted a flight of stairs, which led to the very top of the house. It was a hot summer night, and a window, which opened on to a flat portion of the roof, was wide open. Being but a couple of feet from the floor, it was easy of access. Towards this window, to Kitty's horror, the child wended her steps.

'Norah!' she cried in a startled voice. 'Wake up! What are you doing?'

But the sleeper heard not a word. Through the window she quietly crept; Kitty, her cheeks now blanched with fear, following hastily on.

(*Concluded on page* 54.)

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 34.)

ANYBODY who had taken any real interest in Dick and Sandy must have noticed their unusual restlessness at breakfast next morning. They ate little, and could scarcely conceal their anxiety to get away directly the meal was over. But Mr. and Mrs. Wilcox were entirely taken up with their own affairs, and never even troubled to ask the boys where they were going, which, under the circumstances, was just as well.

It was a difficult job to get their luggage out of the house unobserved, and a great deal of scouting and reconnoitring was necessary before the task was safely accomplished. In spite of the scantiness of their possessions, the bag was fairly heavy, and Dick and Sandy were thoroughly glad to find themselves at last in an omnibus which, they were informed, would take them well on their way to the London Docks.

The boys' first discovery in the immediate neighbourhood of the Docks was a fascinating shop where everything eatable on earth seemed to be crowded together in the small windows. Dick came to a standstill.

'We shall have to buy a tremendous lot of grub for the voyage,' he said. 'We may have to keep stowed away for ages and ages, and we don't want any chance of starving.'

'Let's buy some stuff here, then.' Sandy's eyes danced with excitement at the prospect of spending some of the money which was burning his pockets.

The purchases took time, and when ranged upon the counter were a large and miscellaneous collection. A tin of biscuits, a couple of large cakes, half a dozen loaves, a slab of cooked bacon, and an enormous red sausage, jam, potted meat and sardines, bananas and oranges. Altogether the boys had spent nearly a sovereign, when they finished by the purchase of a long canvas sailor's bag in which to bestow their new possessions.

'And you'd best have one of these jars for water,' the proprietor suggested. 'That's the handiest way to carry it, and you can fill it at the tap down on the wharf. Going to do a bit of yachting, are you?'

'That's about it,' answered Dick, truthfully enough. 'I expect we're going to have a long sail.'

Their increased luggage was extremely heavy, and Sandy ventured on a suggestion.

'Mayn't we leave our things here for a bit?' he said. 'We will come back for them soon.'

The man agreed readily, and the two boys set out on their quest for a Morocco-bound ship very hopefully.

Gradually those hopes dimmed; it proved to be a far harder task than they had expected. It seemed that there was a regular line of steamers to Moorish ports; but when one of them, which was about to take her departure, was pointed out to Dick and Sandy, they realised that it would be pretty hopeless to attempt to stow away on such a bustling craft, with crowded decks and dapper, alert officers.

Hours passed, as they wandered about the Docks, asking questions of any one who seemed inclined to answer them. Night fell, and the temptation attacked the tired boys to go back to their uncle's house, and give up their wild plan. But once Dick had made up that stubborn mind of his, he was hard to turn from his purpose, and the longing to save his father had become the main motive of his life. He soothed and comforted poor, tired Sandy, suggesting a savoury supper in a fried-fish shop. He discovered a cosy corner in one of the wharfside sheds, between two great bales, where they crept in and made a nest of straw and shavings. He sat awake all night, staring into the darkness, with his arm round the younger boy, who slept peacefully with his head pillowed on Dick's shoulder.

Next morning they began their weary search once more, and it was late afternoon before they met with any success. Then a loafing sailor made a helpful suggestion.

'Is it Morocco you're wanting?' he said. 'Well, if you can't afford steamer passages, you won't find a sailing-ship as goes there. Landing's too difficult; they don't touch at them ports. The Canary Islands is the best you'll do, and it is easy enough to get a boat on from there. No distance from the place at all, at all.'

This was an idea, and the boys acted upon it. They happened to have come across a vessel in their wanderings which was bound for the port of Las Palmas in the Canary Islands. She was a little English barque, an old wooden vessel, ill-found and scarcely seaworthy, but to the two boys she appeared to be a very fine ship indeed. She was lying, not in the Docks themselves, but at a little riverside wharf, and, by cautious questioning, they learnt that she was due to sail on the following afternoon.

Nothing could be better, and it really did not seem as though it would be difficult to stow away aboard her. Dick had noticed the evening before that there was no watchman, nor any signs of life on board, and a careful examination from the wharf showed that, although she had taken in her cargo, the hatch-covers had not been replaced. The hatches were simply sheltered by tarpaulins.

The would-be stowaways decided to make their great attempt just after nightfall, and they passed the time between in a hearty meal at a small sailors' eating-house, since, as Dick thoughtfully remarked, it might be a very long time before they tasted hot food again.

Afterwards, they made their way to the little shop where they had left their belongings, and set out once more, staggering under the weight of their possessions.

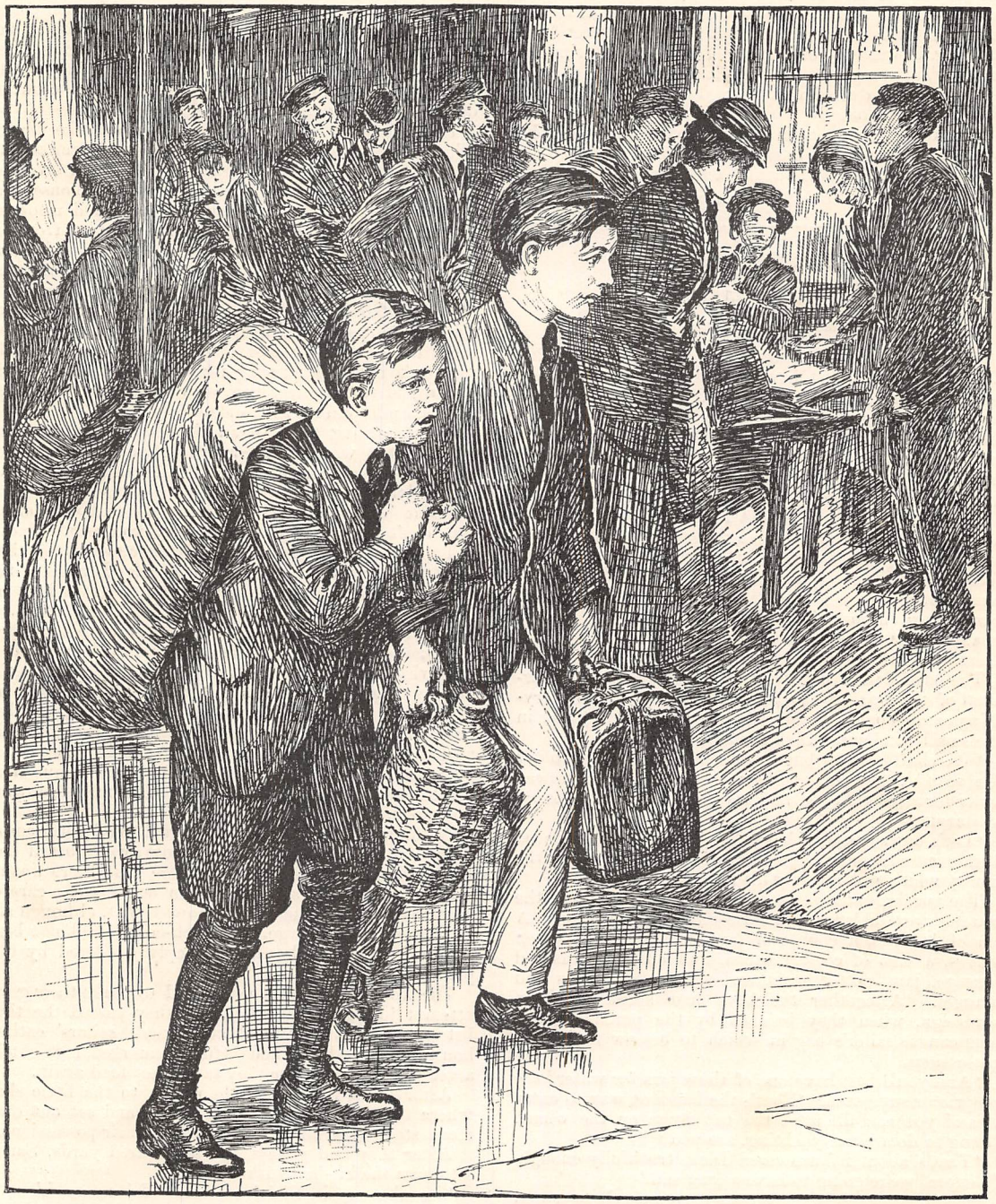
After they had gone about a hundred yards, Sandy set down the kit-bag with a thump.

'I can't carry it, Dick,' he said. 'It's no good.'

Dick, burdened with the bag of clothes and the huge water-jar, looked at his younger brother in despair.

'What are we to do, then?' he asked, hopelessly.

(*Continued on page* 50.)



"They set out once more."

"The loafer made a grab at the purse."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 47.)

WITH the two bags upon the pavement between them, the boys considered the difficult question, until suddenly a solution offered itself in the shape of a particularly undesirable-looking loafer.

He slouched out of a neighbouring public-house and came to a standstill before Dick and Sandy.

'Want them things carried anywheres, young gemmen?' he asked.

Now, since they certainly did want the things carried somewhere, Dick hesitated to refuse the offer, although the aspect of the man, dirty, unshaven, and half-drunk, was very far from inviting. Still, it might be that he was only very badly in want of money . . .

'We'll give you a shilling if you'll carry these two bags down to the wharf where the little Dutch steamer is lying,' said Dick, craftily omitting to mention their own chosen vessel, the *Sea Rover*.

'Right y'are,' the man rejoined, and shouldered the kit-bag without more ado, carrying the other in his hand. They made their way thus towards the wharf, and had almost reached the place, when, in an ill-lit alley, between high, blank walls, the man suddenly stopped short, and dumped down his burdens upon the cobbled paving.

'I'll thank yer for my money,' he growled, sulkily.

'I'm not going to give you anything until you've done what you bargained for,' Dick retorted. 'You said you'd carry them down to the wharf for a shilling.'

'That be hanged for a yarn! A bob, indeed! You'll pay me a dollar, or I'll not give up the swag.'

As the fellow spoke, he stooped as though to make off with the bag of provisions, and Dick, in desperation, made a second offer.

'Look here! You shall have three shillings if you carry them right down to the wharf.'

'Lemme see the money now, then,' the man grumbled, threateningly, and, after a moment's hesitation, the boy slowly drew out his purse.

This was just to give the loafer the opportunity for which he had been waiting. He made a hurried grab at the purse, and would undoubtedly have made off with it had it not been for Sandy's quickness and presence of mind. He was standing alongside the thief, and as the latter turned he stretched out his foot and tripped him up. The clumsy, half-drunken brute fell with a crash and a volley of oaths.

'Take the bag, and cut round the corner into those big sheds . . .' Dick spoke to Sandy in a hurried undertone. 'I'll follow you in half a minute.'

Sandy waited for no second orders. He hauled the bag on to his shoulder and was round the corner of the alley in a minute, whilst Dick turned his attention to the loafer.

The man was on his feet by now. He was a bit shaken, but he rushed at the boy, roaring like a bull, whilst Dick held his ground with fists clenched. A swift escape would have shown that better part of valour which the proverb praises, but the loss of the purse, with half their wealth, rankled, and the boy did not mean to let it go without a fight.

Of course, if the man had been sober, he was a match for three of Dick's size, but, as it was, the odds were not so unfair as might have appeared. Still, one blow from that huge fist would have been quite enough, and although he struck out wildly, it was probable that, in the end, he would get one home.

It was plainly a case for strategy, and suddenly Dick remembered a dodge of which he had read months before. He turned and faced the man.

'Come on, you great brute!' he cried defiantly. 'I'll knock your head off, if you dare to touch me! Take off your coat and play fair!'

The boy began to pull off his coat; instinctively the other started to do the same. But it was tight. He got it as far as the crook of his elbows, and was struggling to extricate himself, when he received a blow in the pit of the stomach that fairly doubled him up.

Dick's action was only a feint, and a feint which had been quite successful. He had slipped back into his coat like an eel, and struck out with all his strength, whilst the other was powerless and hampered. The man went down with a gasp, and sobbed for breath, unhurt, but with all the wind knocked out of his body. Dick stooped over him and secured the purse in an instant.

Then, remembering another artful trick from the same source as the first, he lugged off one of his opponent's heavy boots and hurled it over the high dock wall. He would be safe enough now from pursuit, for to run on cobbled stones with a bare foot would handicap the finest sprinter on record.

Dick was out of sight and hearing, however, long before the fellow had recovered his breath. He reached the wharf unmolested, panting beneath the weight of the kit-bag, and found poor Sandy, half wild with anxiety, crouching behind the bales in the shed.

They waited for a time, until quite satisfied that the loafer had no intention of pursuing them, and then, after filling their water jar from the tap on the quay, they approached the gangway of the little ship and, literally, embarked upon the next stage of their strange adventures.

(*Continued on page* 63.)

SOME SERBIAN PROVERBS.

BETTER the grave than to be a slave.

Better to look from the mountain than from the dungeon.

The sunshine falls on unclean places, but it is not defiled.

When you go as a guest to the wolf see that you have a hound with you.

Labour as if you had a thousand years to live, and pray as if you had to die to-morrow.

When big bells chime, the little ones are unheard.

The fox fears not the man who boasts at night, but the one who rises early in the morning.

Neither hew down the whole forest nor come home without wood.

The good shepherd ought to shear his sheep, not to flay them.

You cannot carry two water-melons under one arm.

Speak the truth, but then hurry away.

When an old dog barks, go to see what the matter is.

HOW FLETCHER WAS TAKEN UNAWARES.

'I SAY,' shouted Fletcher, 'look at young Lang trying to kick a goal! You'll be in the Team, I don't think!'

'*You* won't!' I said, as Lang turned round and grinned; for, though it was a bad shot, Fletcher is far too cheeky.

'Won't I?' he said. 'I'm absolutely sure of a place.'

As it turned out, he was right: when the list was put up, he was down to play half-back, and Lang was only a reserve. I felt jolly sorry. Lang had been practising hard, and I knew he was awfully keen on being in the Team, and especially on account of the match against Danham. It's far away the most exciting of all, and is awfully jolly. We have to drive there in wagonettes, for it's a good long way, and miles from a station, and they always give you a ripping tea, and you get back too late to do any 'prep.' All of which is very decent. Besides, Lang's cousin is in the Danham team, and of course he wanted to play against him.

'You may play, after all,' I told him. 'Some one might be ill.'

'It's not likely. It's to-morrow week, and there isn't time.'

'You never know,' I said, and then the bell rang, and we had to go in.

It was that evening we heard that there was to be an exhibition of flying at Barlow Common the next Wednesday afternoon. It is only two miles away, and Wednesday is the 'half,' so of course we were all jolly keen on going—all of us except Gibson, that is.

'Just think,' he said, 'of walking two miles to see an aeroplane!' But then he lives at Hendon, where aeroplanes are about as plentiful as blackberries.

'Why, you ass!' began Fletcher, 'R. B. Minns is coming!' And a kid called Simpson asked who he was, when he was at home.

'Don't you know that? You are a little idiot!' Fletcher exclaimed. Minns was his special hero just then; he had flown higher than any one else, or looped the loop more times, or something like that. 'I'm going to get his autograph,' he added.

'Perhaps he won't give it you,' I suggested; but Fletcher only laughed.

Lang drew a picture of Fletcher asking Minns for his autograph, and passed it round in 'maths.' the next morning. It was frightful of Fletcher, but it was jolly like him all the same, and he was pretty 'ratty' when he saw it.

For the next few days every one was talking about the flying, until Dr. Morris spoiled it all by giving out at Prayers that Barlow Common would be out of bounds on Wednesday afternoon.

'Beastly shame, I call it!' said Fletcher, when we were waiting for old Brown to come in and take Latin. 'But it won't keep me away; I'm going.'

'Don't be an ass!' we told him. 'You'll only be caught.'

'Why,' Gibson declared, 'the Doctor will probably be there, or some of the masters.'

'Well, I can dodge them, can't I? I'm not an idiot. And it's beastly unfair of them stopping us and then going themselves.'

'I don't know that they are going,' Gibson said.

'I am, anyway,' replied Fletcher. And, though we tried to persuade him not to, he stuck to it.

'It's far too good a chance to miss,' he said. 'Besides, I want that autograph. Why don't you all come? You are a lot of funks!'

On Wednesday afternoon Fletcher went off to Barlow Common with a chap called Tomlins. They came back triumphant, saying they had had a ripping time.

'Don't you wish you'd come now?' Fletcher asked us. 'You said we'd be caught! I wouldn't have missed it for anything. Would you, Tomlins?'

Tomlins said he wouldn't; and they went off into long accounts of the flying, until we were all sick of it.

'I say,' Gibson said, when Fletcher was in the middle of telling us how R. B. Minns came down within a few feet of where he was standing, 'show us the autograph.' And he had to say he hadn't got it.

'Why not?' we all asked.

'Oh, I don't know. I don't think he was giving them.'

'Didn't you ask, then?'

'No. How could I? I wasn't near enough.'

'But you said the aeroplane came down.'

'I know. But I couldn't climb in, could I? I suppose that's what you'd have done.'

'I don't want his wretched autograph,' was Gibson's reply. 'I thought *you* did, though.'

Fletcher looked squashed. 'Anyhow, I have seen him, and you haven't,' he said. 'And I can write for his autograph, can't I?'

In the morning, after Prayers, the Doctor told us there was to be a cinematograph show all about aeroplanes, in the Town Hall, next day, and that we might all go to it. He also said that he was sorry he had not been able to let us see the real flying exhibition, but this might make up for it.

The Town Hall is fairly big, but we pretty well filled all the centre part at the back. Fletcher was sitting just in front of Lang and me, and he turned round and grinned at us.

'This is the only way you little kids can see any flying,' he said, as it was beginning. 'It will seem jolly tame to us, won't it, Tomlins?'

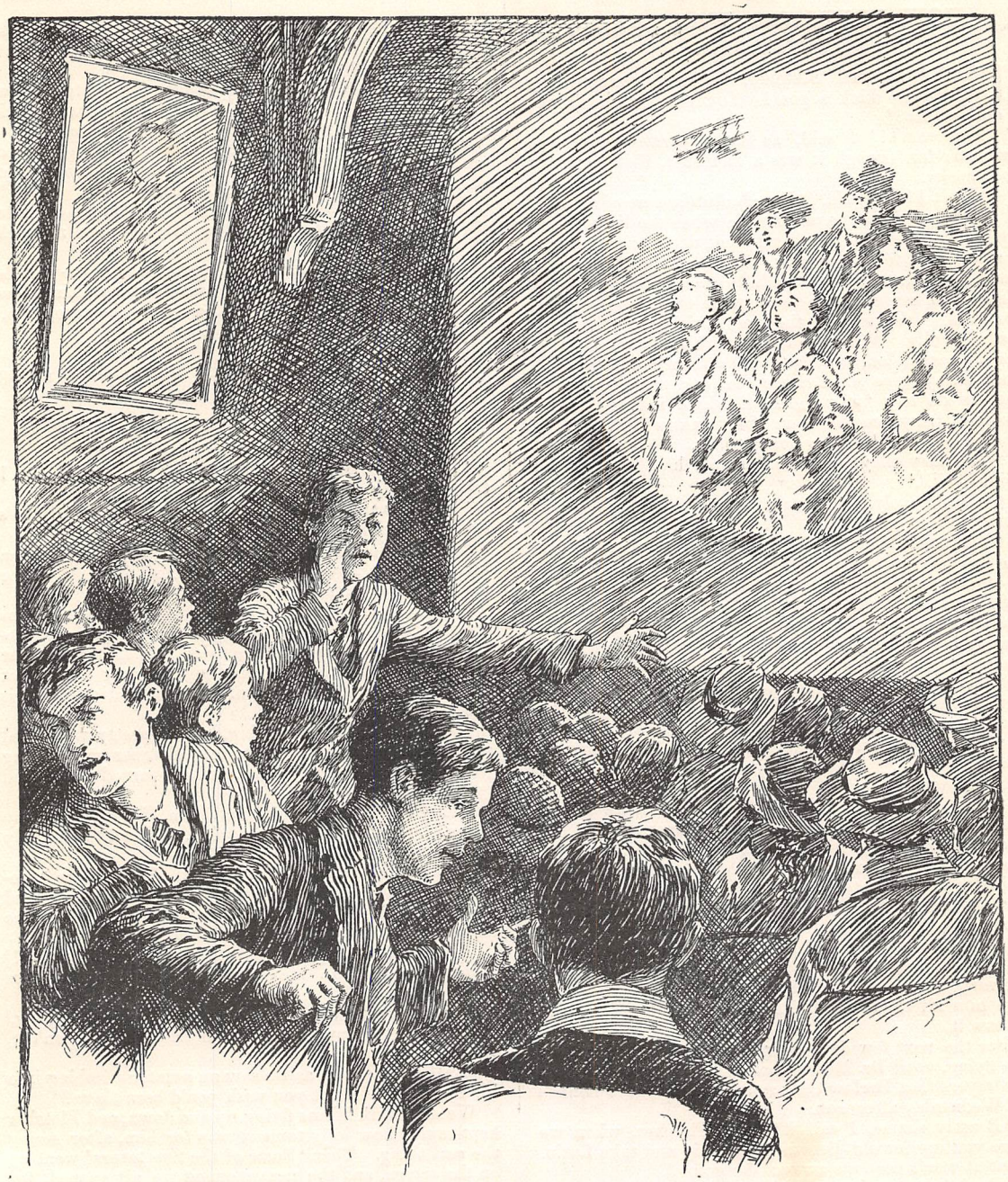
The pictures were rather decent. There were aeroplanes being made, and monoplanes and biplanes, and all different kinds of machines; and then it had on the screen: 'Flying at Barlow Common.'

'How quick they have been getting them ready!' Lang whispered to me. 'It was only the day before yesterday.'

'They sometimes show them the same evening,' I told him. 'I suppose that's your friend Minns, isn't it, Fletcher?'

'Rather!' he said, as we saw an aviator climbing into his machine. 'Don't you wish you'd been there?'

We saw R. B. Minns flying up and down, and Fletcher kept saying how jolly tame it was for him, after seeing the real thing. Then 'Some of the Spectators' went up on the screen, and the next moment we all gasped, for there in front of us was a beautiful photograph of Fletcher himself, standing in front of a lot of people. He was staring into the air, with his mouth wide open, and looking pretty awful, and just behind him was Tomlins. All the fellows were grinning and pointing them out to each other, and Gibson asked them why they hadn't happened to 'dodge' the cinema man. Perhaps Fletcher did think it was jolly tame when he saw Dr. Morris, who was there, staring at it! Anyway,



"All the fellows were grinning, and pointing them out to each other."

he looked rather green, and I don't think he enjoyed the rest of the pictures very much.

When we got back again Fletcher and Tomlins were sent for to the Doctor's study, and they were there some time. Tomlins got off fairly easily (he's only a 'kid'), but Fletcher told us afterwards that he had got enough 'lines' to last him till the end of the term, and the next afternoon he started to do them instead of going with the rest of the team to Danham. Lang went in his place, and played jolly well; in fact, it was really through him that we just managed to win the match by four goals to three. So, though we didn't know it at the time, it was a good thing for us that Fletcher took it into his head to see the flying at Barlow Common!

"'If any one tells you one of your vases is unbroken, *don't believe him!*'"

THE PORTER'S REVENGE.

THERE once lived in Bagdad a very rich and very avaricious merchant. One day, he engaged a porter to carry home for him some precious porcelain vases in a basket. The porter was promised a payment of ten *paras*. 'My friend,' said the merchant, as the two went along together, 'I am an old man, and you are a young one who can still earn plenty of money. Will you not take off a *para* from your hire?'

'Willingly,' answered the porter.

The same mean request was made again and again, until, by the time the merchant's house was reached, the porter had only one *para* to receive. As the two men ascended the staircase, the merchant said to the other: 'And now, if you will consent to resign the last *para*, I will give you in return three pieces of most valuable advice.'

'As you please,' said the porter.

'Well, then,' said the merchant pompously, 'if anybody tells you that fasting is better than feasting, don't believe him. That is my first counsel. The second is: If anybody tells you it is better to be poor than rich, don't believe him. And the third is this: If anybody tells you that it is better to walk than to ride, don't believe him.'

The porter's patience was exhausted. 'Sir,' he said, 'I have heard all these things before, but *I* will give *you* a bit of advice which you never heard before.'

Then the porter flung the basket down the stairs. There was a crash. 'Now,' said the porter, 'if anybody tells you that one of your vases is unbroken, *don't believe him!*'

EXPELLED.

(*Concluded from page* 47.)

THEN came a moment, never to be forgotten in Kitty's young life. Norah Fielder, all unconscious of her danger, was walking towards the edge of the roof. A few more steps, and she would fall with awful force to the ground below.

Kitty seized hold of her. There was a moment's struggle, and both girls were in imminent peril of their lives. Kitty's strength fortunately was the greater, and with all the force she could muster she dragged the girl from her terrible position.

'Where am I? Oh, Kitty!'

Norah was now thoroughly aroused, and beneath the light of the moon she recognised her rescuer.

'Kitty, where am I?' she cried in a frightened voice.

'You're all right, dear,' replied Kitty soothingly. 'You've been walking in your sleep, that's all.'

'Oh, I remember,' gasped Norah. 'I dreamt my locket and chain were here on the roof, and I thought you were a thief trying to stop me from getting them.'

'Never mind what you thought,' said Kitty, taking her hand. 'Come along back to bed again. You'll catch your death of cold, if you stop here.'

Norah shudderingly allowed herself to be led towards the window, and, with Kitty's aid, for she was half faint with the shock, she managed to make her way back in safety to bed.

So quiet were the girls in their movements that none in the household knew until the following morning of the exciting incident which had taken place on the roof during the night.

Shortly after breakfast next day (Norah having told her mother of her terrible adventure) Kitty Carruthers was summoned into the Head Mistress's presence. All the hardness had died out of Mrs. Fielder's face. Stretching out her hand, she drew the girl towards her. 'Kitty,' said she, 'Norah tells me that you were the means of saving her life last night. My child' (the lady's voice broke a little), 'how am I ever to reward you for such an act as this?'

Here was Kitty's opportunity.

'I don't want any reward, Mrs. Fielder,' she cried. 'What I did was nothing; but, oh, if you would *only* give me one more chance, just to prove how sorry I am, I would never be disobedient again—*never, never!*'

For answer, Kitty was drawn closer into the Head Mistress's arms, and then and there she knew that she was pardoned.

And that self-same day a very penitent little Kitty turned over an entirely new leaf in her life's history. In the pages of a certain little note-book, which she called her diary, might have been seen these words, written shortly after her interview with Mrs. Fielder:

'Forgiven.—"Prayer moves the Hand which guides the world."' MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

A BITTER RETORT.

FRANÇOIS DE BASSOMPIERRE was a handsome French soldier and statesman who lived in the reigns of Henry IV. and Louis XIII. He was greatly trusted by his royal masters, and was sent on various embassies to foreign countries. Bassompierre was also a wit, as he is shown by the following anecdote. He had been on an embassy to Spain, and he was describing to Henry IV. his state entry into Madrid:

'I rode on the smallest mule in the world,' he said.

'What an amusing sight that would be, to see an ass upon a mule,' the King interposed, unable to resist the opportunity for a joke.

'Very good, Sire,' replied Bassompierre, who as a courtier knew that it was wise to appreciate a king's witticism. 'But,' he added with keen sarcasm, 'I was your Majesty's representative.' W. A. ATKINSON.

THE SILVER FOX SKIN.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS.

IT was dark except for the glow of the fire in the middle of the *rancherie*, which stood on the lonely north-west coast of Vancouver Island. Outside the rude wooden building, that looked like a low-roofed barn, the Pacific surf roared among the boulders and the big black pines wailed in the breeze. Short, brown-faced men, with coarse dark hair, squatted on one side of the fire. They were sea Indians of the Siwash tribe, and had lately come back from the North with furs. Their clothes were much the same as the Canadian settlers wore, but they talked excitedly in Chinook.

Opposite sat a white man, with a pipe in his mouth, a Chinaman, and two boys, one of whom had come out from England to learn ranching. The other, Jake Winthrop, was the son of the ranch-owner, who had somewhat reluctantly allowed them to accompany his neighbour, Pete Allen, on a canoe voyage along the coast. Pete and Luen Yen were now bargaining for furs.

The Siwash *Tyee* looked on while an Indian woman sorted and resorted the skins, which were of different values, into separate bundles, in order to make each lot look as attractive as possible. Somehow this reminded Tom Dawson, the English boy, of a three-card gambler he had watched on a racecourse at home: there was one skin she changed about that seemed to be worth more than the rest. Tom did not know Chinook, but Jake explained what was going on.

'That fox-skin is the pick of the bunch, and Pete is keen on getting it. You see, it's touched with what they call silver; furs get white in winter in the North. Of

course, if it was all silver, Pete couldn't buy it if he sold his ranch. Then it's got badly torn by the trap or something, which brings its value down.'

'But they've been arguing about it for two or three hours.'

'That's a way they have. If the bunch doesn't look good enough, the *Klootch* throws in the fox and takes some beavers off. Pete's a pretty smart buyer, but I guess the deal will be all right if Yen is satisfied. It's seldom he gets stung.'

Tom, who understood that 'stung' means cheated, studied the Chinaman. Yen wore loose blue clothes, and had coiled up his pigtail under a small blue cap. One could not tell if he was young or old, and his yellow face was expressionless. Sometimes he made a sign with his thin, long-nailed hand and sometimes ate a few stewed berries from a little bowl. The Siwash dry the wild fruit for winter use, but Tom thought it strange that Yen used his *fingers*.

'This bargaining makes me tired,' Tom said by-and-by. 'I'm glad I didn't go into business; ranching's a better job.'

Jake nodded. 'More satisfaction in making something grow? That's all right; but our side's paying good dollars, and wants their value. When you start a deal, you have to see that the other fellow doesn't get ahead of you.' He paused and grinned. 'Well, I reckon that *Tyee's* a bit of a rogue, but I'm backing Yen.'

Tom glanced at another group of Indians, who sat by themselves, watching the bargainers with a kind of grim contempt. They were fierce sea-hawks from the North, who staked their lives on their skill with the paddle when the long canoes laboured among the icy combers, and matched their strength and cunning against the wild creatures of the frozen woods. All the same, that was no reason Pete and Yen should be cheated.

Tom began to feel sleepy. The dusky faces got indistinct, figures faded into the drifting smoke, and the roar of the breakers outside somehow changed to the shouting on an English racecourse. Instead of the black-haired *Klootch*, he saw a shabby man shuffling three cards on a tray. The fellow let you think you could pick out the knave, but when you put down your money you found it was another card. Then the bargaining stopped and Tom, rousing himself for a few moments, vacantly watched Yen pick up a bundle. They had obviously got the fox-skin, but Tom pulled his blanket round him, and, lying down on the floor, went to sleep.

Some hours later the cold disturbed him, and he looked about, half awake. The fire had sunk, but there was a faint red glow in the middle of the long room. It was very quiet, except for the roar of the surf, and he thought everybody was asleep. He could see groups of indistinct figures upon the floor and the bundles of skins near the fire. They were the same size and neatly tied up, with the under surface of the top skin turned outside.

Tom noticed this drowsily, and shut his eyes, but did not go to sleep, and when he looked up again remarked that one of the shadowy figures had moved; a man lay stretched out where there had been nobody before. As Tom glanced at him he crept forward a yard or two, and when he stopped the lad felt his nerves tingle. Nobody else seemed to be awake; everything was quiet.

Tom wondered what the fellow meant to do. The Siwash were friendly, but something mysterious was obviously going on, and, after all, an Indian never gets quite tame. Besides, the fellow's shape was strange and deformed; he had looked like a heavy-shouldered animal as he moved silently through the gloom. He crept on again till he was close to the fire, and Tom felt puzzled, because his shape was different now, and the row of bundles had got longer. It looked as if the Indian had brought another; but, if he had stolen Pete's, he would not put it where it could be seen. Then the firelight, flickering up, touched the figure, and Tom saw that it was not an Indian: the man wore loose, blue clothes. But why had Yen brought back the skins?

Lifting his head gently, he watched him turn over the nearest bundles, and suddenly understood. This was a variation of the three-card trick: the *Klootch*, no doubt by the *Tyee's* orders, had cheated the white men. They had not got the bundle with the fox's skin. Yen had found out the trick, and was now looking for the one they had meant to buy. Tom wondered how he could tell it from the others, but after a few moments Yen began to crawl back with something in one arm. It was obvious that he had changed the lots again; then, to his surprise, Tom saw that Yen was moving towards him, but he kept still until the Chinaman stopped a yard or two away and pushed the skins in his direction with his foot. 'Canoe,' he whispered, and lay motionless.

Tom understood. He was in deep shadow and nearer the door. If he could reach it without being seen, and was afterwards noticed, the Indians would not suspect him, although they might have suspected Yen. But he had yet to reach the door, and his heart beat as he crawled towards it. He made a little noise: the bundle was heavy and scraped along the ground. Still, nobody moved, and he breathed easier when he stole away into the dark. He could not be heard now because the big black pines were roaring in the wind and the air throbbed with the crash of the combers on the point. He fell down as he made his way across the boulders to the canoe, but found her, and, after putting the skins on board, went back to the *rancherie*. Nobody heard him creep in, and he went to sleep again.

When Pete wakened him he saw the first sun-rays glisten on the inlet by which the building stood. It was early, but the Siwash were busy cooking, and a girl presently brought the white men a bark tray containing slices of cured salmon. Yen had got some coffee ready, and when breakfast was over the *Tyee* made them a farewell speech.

'He reckon's we'd better start right now,' Pete explained to Tom; if the wind backed southerly, we'd make a long trip, and he can't let us have any grub. Says he's sorry we can't stop longer, but I guess he's glad to see us go. Anyway, there's nothing doing now. He's got our dollars and we've got the skins.'

Tom looked at Yen, who stood close by, but his face was unmoved as usual. After all, it was the Chinaman's affair, and Tom knew when to be silent. Ten minutes later, the party launched along, finely-modelled sea canoe, hollowed by fire and the Indian's tiny adze out of a single log. She had a long bow, carved like a bird's head, that swelled through a fine wave-line curve into her fore-body. Her owners, two Siwash from the south coast, shoved her out, the paddles dipped, and as they slid down the inlet Yen saluted the Indians, who shouted to them from the beach. He was dignified and calm, but Tom thought his narrow eyes twinkled.

(*Continued on page* 58.)

"An Indian woman sorted and re-sorted the skins."

"Yen smiled as he moved some of the furs."

THE SILVER FOX SKIN.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Continued from page* 55.)

IT was a struggle to drive the craft to windward round the point, where the long green rollers broke in sheets of foam, and Tom felt anxious as he looked out to sea. He knew something about sailing on the British coast, but they had to face the open Pacific, with nothing to break the sea between them and Japan. It rolled up in steep-fronted combers with flashing crests, and as they foamed past, the canoe lurched out half her length. This was while they drove her, foot by foot, off shore, but when they were far enough two sprit-sails were set and a Siwash threw over the long steering paddle.

He brought the wind on her quarter, the seas rolled up obliquely behind, and she sped before them, rising and falling with an easy sweep, while the little sprit-sails shone in the sun like a bird's white wings. Her hull was flat-floored and shallow, and she ran remarkably fast; but Tom wondered what she would do if they tried to beat against a head-wind. He asked Jake, who told him:

'They put over one or two six-foot paddles and fix them so they go under her like a centre-board. She can't drift off to leeward much when she has to drag the flat blades through the water. But what's Yen doing?'

The Chinaman quietly opened the bundle of skins, and Tom saw Pete's eyes get hard.

'That's not the lot!' he shouted. 'They've beat us out of our money! Now I know why that rogue of a *Tyee* hustled us off.'

Yen smiled as he moved some of the furs, and left the fox-skin uncovered.

'But,' said Pete stupidly, 'I don't get on to this. It's a pretty good lot; worth more than the others, and with the fox. But it's not the bunch we bought.'

Yen explained the trick that had been played, and his narrow eyes gleamed when Tom asked how he knew which lot contained the fox.

'Chinaman savvy cheat tlick; lookee close. Catchee bundle; fingels led.'

Then he turned over the top skin, and they saw it was marked by the red print of his fruit-stained thumb. Tom now understood why he had used his hand when he ate the berries, and Pete broke into a hoarse laugh.

'I guess it would be worth a dollar to hear that *Tyee's* remarks when he finds out he stole the wrong bundle.'

They ran before the sea for a day and night, and then the Siwash, who took Yen on, landed the others at a cove where a smaller canoe lay upon the beach. Here Pete packed up a little food, of which they had not much left.

'I promised Harding I'd bring him some specimens for assay from the mineral claim we pegged out in the bush,' he said. 'He reckoned some Siwash were fishing on the Somatlin creek, and if I strike them and get some grub, I'll push on for home across the range. If not, I'll come down to Sandy Cove, and you'll wait for me there until to-morrow night. It's not far to the inlet, and you'll make the cove easy if there's no more wind than now.'

He plunged into the forest that crept down to the waterside, and the boys launched the canoe. She was a river canoe, about fourteen feet long, with a little more than two feet beam, and had been burned smooth outside.

It was a dark morning, and a long ocean swell rumbled on the beach, but what wind there was blew off the land, and the undulations were smooth. Besides, there were islands outshore. They stepped the short mast, and, setting sail, sat in the bottom of the craft, watching the beach slide by.

Dark mountains and ragged pines showed dimly through drifting mist. It was a wild and rugged country behind the coast, uninhabited except by wandering Siwash, but a deep inlet that led to the settlement was not far away. There are many of these rock-walled inlets, which are very like the Scottish sea-lochs, on the British Columbian coast, and some run long distances into the land. The wind, however, got very light, and it began to rain as a gap in the mountains opened up ahead. The rain came down in torrents while they drifted with the tide, and then suddenly stopped and a dark line moved out across the water from the gap. This marked the mouth of the inlet, a deep chasm torn by Nature through the hills. It was about two miles wide, but narrowed further up.

'Breeze coming, and plenty of it,' Jake remarked. 'The trouble is that it's right ahead.'

The dark line on the water became edged with white, there was a curious humming sound, and the canoe listed violently down until her lee gunwale was level with the rippling sea. They hauled the sheet, put the paddles over for centre-boards, and sat as high as possible on the windward side when she lurched away, throwing a wave of foam off her bow. Showers of spray blew into their faces and drenched the straining sail, and now and then water washed on board to lee. She was sailing very fast, but Tom wondered anxiously whether she was gaining much ground, because a light, shallow craft drifts sideways when beating against the wind.

'We'll see what we've made when we're on the next tack,' Jake remarked.

They stretched across to the other shore, brought her round, and came back, close hauled, but the breeze was freshening, and she staggered in the gusts with her lee side in the foam. Less water came in than Tom expected, but they could not bail it out, because she would have capsized when they got down from the weather gunwale, where their weight kept her up. Three or four times, in order to save her, they were forced to loose the sheet and let the sail thrash about while she drove to leeward. Then, as they neared the beach they had left, Jake indicated a clump of trees ashore, and Tom saw that after sailing four miles they had gained two or three hundred yards.

'This won't do; she's making nothing,' he said gloomily. 'Besides, she won't stand up to her sail long.'

Jake nodded. 'Down mast! We've got to drive her with the paddle.'

They edged in to the beach, and kneeling in the bottom of the craft, facing forward, paddled hard. The inlet was lined by short-splashing waves that threw showers of spray on board, and now and then the savage gusts brought them to a standstill. If they slackened paddling for a moment, they began to drift astern. They were wet, and it began to rain again, but the wind did not drop. When they could creep up along the shore the water was smooth, but they were forced to cross deep bays, where she lurched and plunged among small but angry combers, and it was only by breathless efforts they reached the point ahead. Tom's back ached horribly; his hands got sore and began to bleed. Dark mountains

that seemed to get no nearer loomed through the mist; the dripping pines hardly moved astern.

'Shove her along!' Jake gasped now and then. 'We've *got* to make the cove.'

This was obvious, because if Pete did not find the Indians and came down to the shore to meet them, he would have nothing to eat until they arrived. Somehow they kept it up until evening, and then finding a forest-covered point, on which some rocks promised shelter, ran the canoe aground.

'If you'll bring up the load, I'll look for a camping place and try to make a fire,' said Jake, who scrambled across the rough beach.

Tom carried up the skins, and, putting them under a tree, went back for the blankets. As he did so, he stopped and stood still for a few moments, horror-stricken. The canoe was not where he had left her—he could see a strip of water between her and the beach. It was obvious that he had forgotten to pull her up properly and a gust had blown her off while she rocked in the broken wash that beat upon the stones. Their food and blankets were on board, and the water was deep.

(*Concluded on page* 70.)

FAITHFUL ELSIE.

A Story of Denmark.

ONE day Volmer, the King, was teasing Hendrik, his squire, about the maiden Elsie, to whom Hendrik was betrothed.

'Don't you think,' said the King, 'that Elsie, to whom you are betrothed, is rather changeable and untrustworthy?'

'I do *not* think so,' replied the squire, ill-pleased with his master's tone. 'My Elsie loves me as dearly as your Lily loves you.'

The King laughed. 'Well, to-morrow,' he said, 'we shall see. I will myself test the girl. If I ask her to marry *me*, I feel sure that she will say "Yes," even if she does not know that I am the King.'

At this the courtiers who were present wagged their heads and laughed loudly, as in duty bound.

The next day the King went out hunting. Elsie was sitting in her father's garden, spinning industriously, and singing with the birds. She looked very sweet and pretty, seated there amongst the flowers, in her blue kirtle, with its loose, white sleeves. Her dainty little foot busily turned the spinning-wheel, while the cat purred at her side, and the bees and butterflies flitted hither and thither.

Hark! what was that? Elsie raised her head at the sound of a horn. Shading her eyes with her hand, she saw approaching a merry train of horsemen. Over the ditches they leaped; they trampled down the corn. Very grand gentlemen they looked in their scarves and plumes, and as they passed close to the garden the gayest one of them all, who wore a scarlet cloak and had golden spurs, reined in his horse and halted at the gate. Elsie ceased spinning, for she saw that this fine fellow had something to say.

'Fair maiden, I greet you!' he said. 'There you sit amidst your roses, which are not half so beautiful as *you* are. You, to me, are the loveliest rose of all. For many weary months have I pined in secret for you.'

Who could this knight be? Modest Elsie blushed and trembled. She rose and dropped a curtsey; then, lifting her spinning-wheel, turned towards the door.

'Oh, do not go away,' implored the rider; 'you have nothing to fear from me. I only desire, in the hearing of these noble Danish knights, to offer you my heart and my hand. If you will marry me, dear Elsie, you will make me very happy, and I will make you very rich. I will adorn your golden hair with snowy pearls and your slender neck with precious gems. You shall ride in a splendid chariot, drawn by four magnificent grey horses. You shall dance on marble floors, and have as much music as you please. In the summer-time we will ride together through the beautiful country; in the winter we will sit in warmth and comfort close to the blazing hearth.'

Pushing back the golden curls from her white forehead, Elsie looked straight at her fine wooer. Their eyes met; in her steady blue ones was a roguish look, and a smile was on her lips.

'Remember,' she said, 'that I am only a poor peasant maiden and you are a gallant knight. If you really wish to wed me, you, too, must be a peasant, otherwise I will not have you. Will you, for love of me, hang upon the wall your trusty sword?'

'Yes,' replied Volmer, 'to please you, dear Elsie, I will lay aside my good sword, "Dynadel," and will swing the scythe, and mow your father's hay for him.'

'But, Sir Knight,' said the girl, 'you could not possibly mow in that grand scarlet cloak of yours. You must have a plain grey coat to wear when you are at work in the fields.'

'Oh, very well,' answered Volmer; 'the cloak shall go with the sword, and I'll wear anything you like.'

'And then,' the girl went on, 'when you are a peasant you will not, of course, need your horse. You will have to guide a yoke of steers before the plough.'

'Ah, well, if it must be so, I will let my horse go free. I would not have him ridden by any other person. But, for love of little Elsie, I will tread the furrow and guide the oxen, if only she will walk beside the plough.'

'Then,' said Elsie, 'you must empty your cellar of its costly wines and drink the mead which I shall brew for you.'

'Oh, I'll drink your mead. My minstrel is welcome to the wine. That fellow is always thirsty. Anything else, fair lady?'

'Yes,' replied Elsie, still in a grave tone, though her eyes twinkled more than ever, 'you must break your shield and destroy all your armour.'

'I am not wearing armour.'

'Of course not—to hunt in! But you *have* armour.'

'You seem to know a great deal about me. Well, I will destroy the armour—to please *you*. Anything else?'

'You must pull down your castle, and let your plough trace furrows in its ruins.'

'So I have a castle, have I?'

The King could no longer keep up the pretence. He burst into a hearty laugh.

'You rogue!' he exclaimed. 'I believe that you have guessed my secret. You know that I *must* bear my shield, and dwell in my castle, because to me (unworthy though I am) is committed the honour of our beloved country. Yes, I am Volmer, and I dwell in yonder towers. Whoso ploughs them, ploughs up Denmark.' Then, changing his tone, the King said gently, 'You have won the day, fair Elsie; I will tempt you no more. Your King admires and blesses you, for you have a heart of gold.' Lifting his hat in a farewell

"She rose, and dropped a curtsey."

salute, King Volmer spurred on his horse and swept on with his men. The wood resounded with the cry of the hounds and the blare of the hunter's horn.

Then a youth leaped over the green hedge and stood by Elsie's side. It was Hendrik, who had heard all that had passed between his sweetheart and the King. 'My true love!' he said fondly; 'my loyal Elsie!' And none saw the affectionate embrace of the happy lovers, unless it was the Golden Goose on the tall tower of Valdemar.

E. Dyke.

"The Gurkha uncorked his water-bottle, and sprinkled a few drops on his damp forehead."

THE WHITE BROTHER.

PRIVATE RODNEY LAKE stood in his place in the trench cleaning his bayonet. Like all British soldiers, he took a cheerful view of life, even in the most trying conditions, but on this particular evening a broader smile than usual lit up his sun-browned face. It attracted the attention of a Gurkha, who happened to be passing down the trench. 'White soldier feel happy?' he inquired, grinning himself in sympathy.

'Happy?' answered Lake. 'Yes; and you'd feel happy, John, if you'd been in this old rat-hole as long as I have.'

'You goin' home?'

'Not much. But the general come along here an hour ago——'

'I see him.'

'Well, he shook hands with our sergeant, and he says, "I have good news for you, boys," he says. "You've to go over the top to-morrow. And I don't want you to stop at the first line of trenches," he says, "nor yet the second, nor the third. Four lines of enemy trenches I want you to take to-morrow," he says.'

The Gurkha nodded wisely. 'I know. We go make charge to-morrow, too.'

'Right-oh, Johnny. I'll look out for you when we get to the fourth line o' trenches.'

The Gurkha grinned his appreciation of this compliment and went his way.

'What were you jawing to the nigger for?' asked the next man to Rodney. He had not long come out from England, and was learning much that surprised him.

'Gurkhas aren't niggers,' said Rodney Lake, decisively. 'They're good little chaps, Gurkhas are. And they're uncommon fine troops, too,' he added.

A heavy bombardment was going steadily on while the men talked; indeed, if they had not been used to the noise they would have thought any conversation impossible. As it was, they even managed to sleep a little despite the deafening roar that went steadily on all night. It was a welcome sound to Rodney Lake's ears, for he knew the British guns were preparing the way for the charge his regiment would make in the morning. The word was given early, and the khaki figures swarmed over the top of the trench, the sunlight gleaming on their bayonets as they hurled themselves into the very teeth of the machine-gun fire that blazed from the enemy's lines. The general's wish was more than fulfilled—two, three, four lines of trenches were captured, the enemy giving ground before the flash of cold steel; and even then the British pressed on, drove them, fighting desperately, from the next trench to the next. Seven lines were taken before that gallant charge was checked, and the British paused to strengthen and secure what they had taken. It proved to be rather more than it was possible to hold at that time: supports which were expected could not come up soon enough, and large masses of the enemy were being brought forward to regain their lost trenches. By slow degrees, and amidst heavy fighting, the handful of British soldiers was forced back to the fourth line of trenches they had taken. These they held firmly, despite all the desperate efforts of the enemy to dislodge them; and the expected reserves at length arriving, the ground gained became secure. The success was not without cost; many gallant men lost their lives in the desperate fighting for the trenches, and many others fell wounded by the withering machine-gun fire.

Among these last was Rodney Lake. He had fought hard during the English advance, and was among the last few men to be forced out of the sixth trench. It was just as he gained the level ground that he was hit, and fell, dazed by the shock, in the rear of his retreating friends.

When he came to himself he realised that he had been unseen, and was left on an open space of ground between what was now the first line of British and the first of the enemy's trenches, exposed to the fire of both armies, and unable to move an inch. Rodney did not take in the full horror of his position at once. He felt his side feebly, and fumbled for the bottle of iodine with which he was provided, but he was too weak to draw the cork. 'This'll take me back to Blightie'* he muttered. 'If it hasn't done for me altogether.'

How long he lay there, faint with pain and exhaustion, with shells bursting sometimes so near that the earth they threw up was scattered over him, he never knew. He was roused by a figure kneeling at his side, cutting the uniform away from his wound, and putting on the first field dressings with which every soldier is provided.

'Hullo, Johnny! you're a good sport, coming out here to do me up.'

'You going to get on my back—I carry you in.'

'*Am* I?' demanded Rodney, faintly. 'Not much. I get hit behind, and you get the V.C. I *don't* think.'

The Gurkha smiled. No one could appreciate courage better than he, and the man who joked while his lips were white with pain called for respect as well as sympathy.

'You'd better hop back to your mates, old son. This isn't a healthy spot to stand in.'

Without replying, the Gurkha raised Rodney's head and shoulders on his arm. The jar of his wound made him faint away entirely, and his dead weight was more than the little Gurkha could lift unaided. Putting forth all his strength, however, he managed to drag the unconscious man towards a spot where there were a few trees, which might afford some cover. Only a few yards at a time they moved, with pauses to take breath or crouch to avoid the falling shells, but at last the place was reached. Kneeling on the ground, with the young Englishman's head on his knees, the Gurkha uncorked his water-bottle and sprinkled a few drops on his damp forehead. Rodney opened his eyes at length, but they were bright with fever, and he began to ramble in his talk.

'Gurkhas aren't niggers, I tell you. There was a Gurkha once—he didn't leave me ——'

The Gurkha took the hot hand in his own. 'I never leave you—my white brother.'

'Are you there, Johnny? I thought we were back with the boys—looks as if we're for it this time, old pal.'

There was a long silence disturbed only by the heavy continuous bombardment, and the scream of the shells that still burst perilously close to them. At last the Gurkha leaned forward suddenly. 'Stretcher-men see us—they coming here.'

'What 'o,' said Rodney, faintly. 'Then it'll be Blightie after all—and I'll tell them you've got to get the V.C., Johnny, old boy.'

The Gurkha smiled. 'I not want anything for helping my brother.'

D. Percy Smith.

GRANDPAPA'S DREAM.

MATILDA, and Tony, and Janet, and Ned
Once hid themselves under their grandpapa's bed,
And when the old gentleman laid him down there,
He dreamed he was tossed by a bull in the air—
The bed rose up high, and went bumpety-bump!
And Grandpapa fell on the floor with a thump!

The end of that story, which came very quick,
Had something to do, I believe, with a stick!

W. Radcliff.

* England—home.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 50.)

CHAPTER IV.

THE barque was quite left to herself, but the gangway had been hauled in. It was, however, an easy matter to climb aboard. Dick tackled it first and had little difficulty; Sandy then handed up the two bags and the jar, and followed. A little assistance from his brother, and he, too, found himself standing on the vessel's deserted deck. There was no moon, but somehow, in London it never seems to be quite dark; there is always a faint glow from her myriad lights.

The tarpaulin over the hatch was fastened to ringbolts on the deck by short lanyards. It looked at first as though the boys would be unable to get below without leaving an obvious clue to their presence in the shape of a loosened lashing. However, after experiment, they found that by slacking up two of the lines, they could lift the heavy canvas sufficiently to crawl beneath it.

Fortunately there was but a short drop from the deck to the top of the cargo, and there was soft falling. The barque was laden with compressed straw; large quantities of this is exported to the Canary Islands, where it is used for packing bananas. It is made up into small oblong bales, but there was plenty of straw lying about loose as well.

'Come along, Sandy,' said Dick. 'This is grand! We'll make ourselves a snug corner.'

'Right-oh! Wait a minute while I strike a match, and ——'

'Don't be an ass!' Dick shouted. 'You'll set the ship afire—a match amongst all this straw! No, you'll just have to feel your way, young man, so don't make any mistake about it.'

Sandy gave in to the obvious truth of Dick's words, and the pair of adventurers proceeded to curl themselves up in a soft nest, where the sweet smell of the clean straw soon lulled them to sleep.

The boys were only aroused next morning, when the ship's carpenter began to fasten down the wooden coverings of the hatch. They lay motionless until the muffled sound of the hammer strokes told them that the whole cover was replaced, and that they were safe from being overheard. Then they made a good meal and sat down to pass the time as best they might.

In one place the cargo was not piled to quite the same level as the rest, and here, now that it was day, a little light seemed to filter through the crevices of the straw. The boys succeeded in shifting slightly the outermost bale, and found that it covered a small porthole, fitted with thick, coarse glass. Probably there was a row of similar ports on either side, but the rest were covered. At some time or other, the ship must have carried passengers or emigrants in her 'tween-decks, for whose comfort the place had to be properly lit.

The thickness of the glass and the dust upon the outside made it impossible to see through, but it gave enough light for all ordinary purposes, and it was cheering to find that the first part of the voyage would not be passed in utter darkness.

After an hour or two a heavy tramping upon the deck above, and the loud shouting of orders, told Dick and Sandy that the *Sea Rover* was getting under way. At first she moved so slowly that they hardly realised she had left the wharf, but, as she gathered speed, they could hear the ripple of the smooth water as it passed along her side.

For a very long time—some hours in fact—there was no sign of any different conditions. Now and again a lumbering tread would pass on the planks above, or the rattle of blocks and the thud of a coil of rope on deck told them that work of some kind was going forward.

Suddenly, at about four in the afternoon, there was a noise from forward which startled them out of their wits. It was as if a hundred tons of heavy stones were being thrown down haphazard.

Sandy started, and involuntarily clutched at Dick's arm.

'Oh, I say, what's happened?' he gasped. 'It must be a collision or something!'

As the steady rippling of the water ceased, and the barque no longer forged ahead, Dick was inclined to agree with his brother, and, cold with fear, they waited, vaguely expecting to hear the order given to take to the boats.

But nothing happened, and after a while they realised that the anchor had been dropped, and that what they had heard was nothing more nor less than the rattle of the chain through the hawse-pipe.

For six hours they lay at anchor, waiting, of course, for another ebb tide. It had been dark for some time when the steady tramp of feet, and the clank-clank of the links as the chain came home, told them that they were about to begin their voyage in good earnest.

The crew above were manning the capstan, and, very faintly, they could hear the sound of singing, as the sailors paced round and round in time to a sea chanty.

After the last link had come aboard, there was noise enough and to spare—loud-shouted orders, the shrill whistle of the bos'un's pipe, the thud of loose ropes, and the continual clatter and tramp of heavy feet. To any one below, every sound on deck is greatly exaggerated, and the noise made by a ship's crew in making sail becomes a very pandemonium. By the time things quieted down, it was early morning, and the boys fell asleep utterly exhausted.

When Dick and Sandy woke, they were conscious at first only of a strange vast discomfort, which, when they tried to move, became very definite indeed.

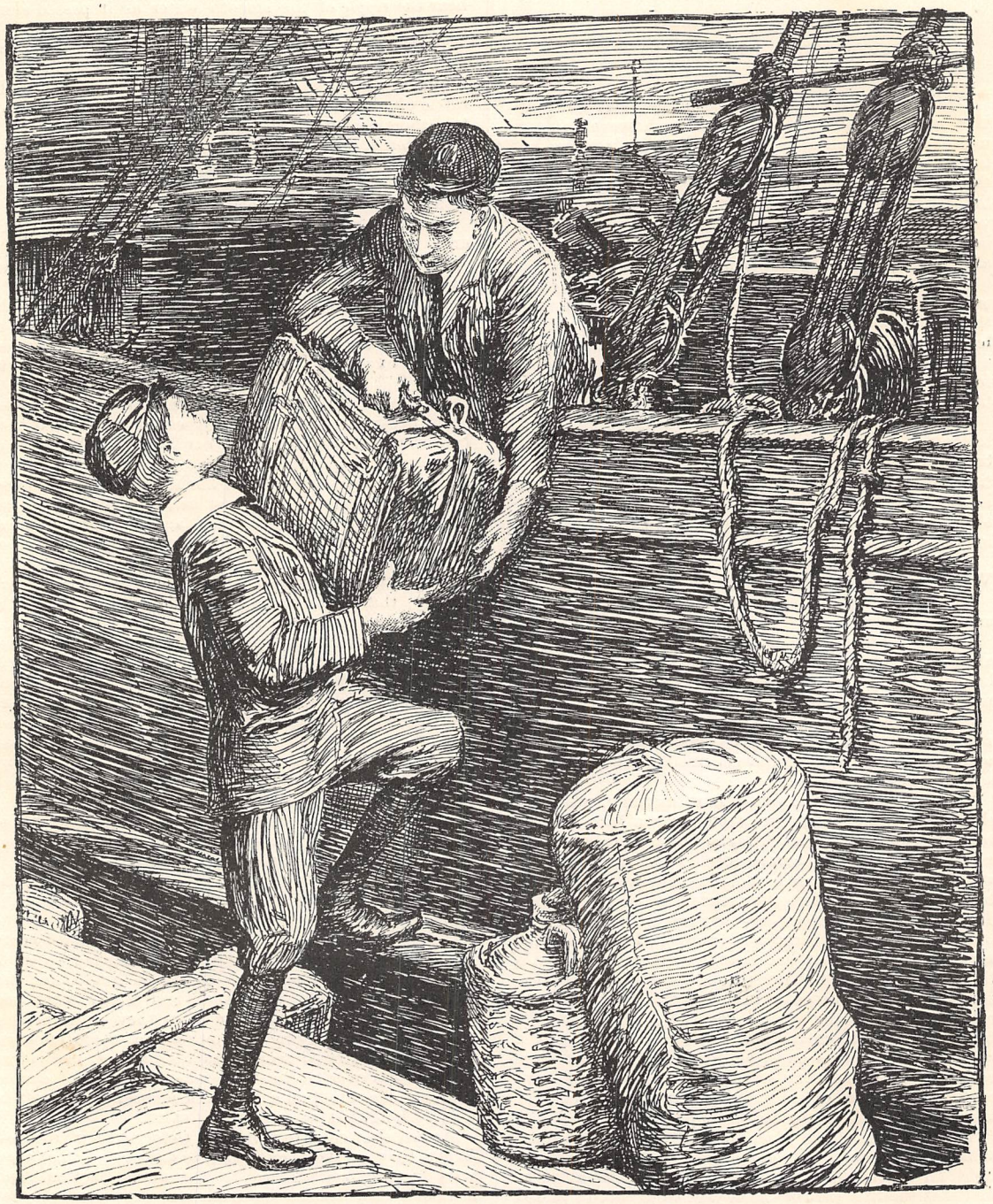
The deck above was heeled at a sharp angle, and the sea swirled merrily past, as the barque sped through the water.

The boys' experiences of the next four-and-twenty hours were pleasant neither to remember nor to write about. The *Sea Rover* was light and lively, and her motion soon taught poor Dick and Sandy what seasickness meant. Luckily for them they were in snug quarters, where they had warmth and comparative comfort. Dick suffered more than his brother, and before the day was over he heartily wished that he had chosen a quiet office stool on a firm floor instead of a corner in a ship's hold that was never still at all.

At last sleep came to help them to forget their troubles. When they awoke they found, to their relief, that they were getting accustomed to the quick motion, and although they longed for fresh air, they gradually recovered something of their usual spirits.

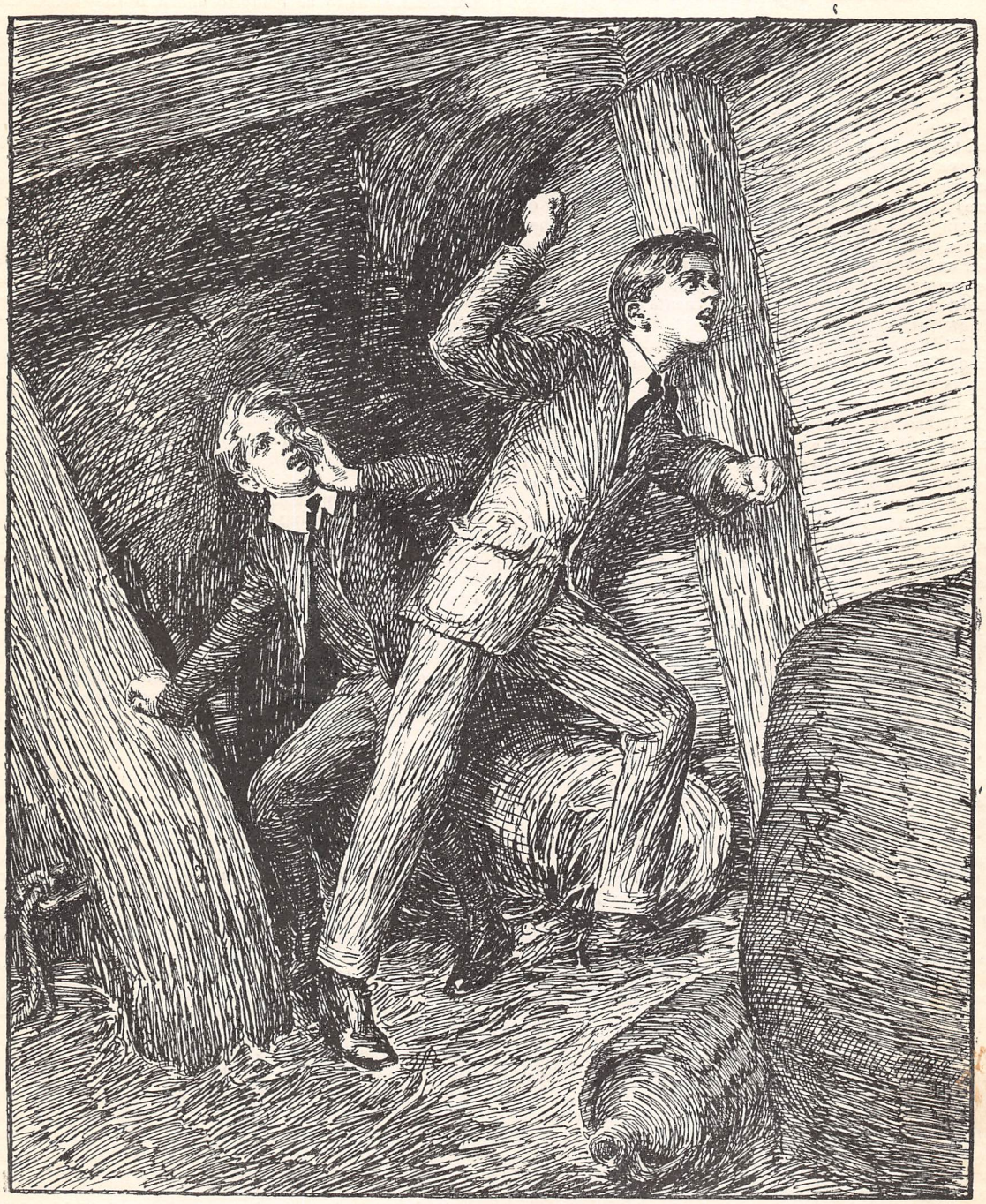
Nevertheless, even when sea-sickness and its misery was a thing of the past, life in the hold of the *Sea Rover* was a dreary and monotonous thing.

(*Continued on page* 66.)



"Sandy handed up the two bags and the jar."

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY



"The two beat upon the massive bulkhead with their hands, shouting at the top of their feeble voices."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 63.)

IT had been the boys' intention to remain in hiding for a week at least, and they had more than enough food to last them for that time. After four or five days, however, they began to get desperately tired of doing nothing. They invented all manner of ways of killing time: they played every game they could remember of guessing and asking questions, they told each other stories, they re-read again and again the tale of how their ancestor hid the treasure. Then they fell back on the paper in which their parcels had been wrapped, and almost learnt by heart the advertisements on an old page of newspaper.

Finally, Dick suggested that they should try to make things from the straw piled around them, and Sandy, always ambitious, embarked upon a hat, which, in the end, was neither becoming nor serviceable.

If it had not been for Dick's care in winding up his watch nightly, they would have lost all count of time, so slowly it seemed to drag by; they might, from their feelings, have been sixty instead of six days concealed in the hold of the *Sea Rover*.

It was on the sixth morning that they began to look about them for a way out of their hiding-place, although they did not yet confess to each other their longing to emerge.

'I say, Dick,' said Sandy, casually, after a long period of thoughtful silence, 'how are we going to get out of this when the time comes?'

'Out of what?' Dick asked in his turn. He knew well enough what his brother meant, but he was not anxious to confess that he had no answer ready.

'Why, out of this hold, of course. Is the hatch fastened down?'

'You know it is,' said Dick, irritably. 'What d'you think? It's got a tarpaulin over the planks, and it's wedged down. We're not going to get out that way.'

'Well, I don't see what other way there is,' Sandy remarked.

'Oh, I expect there are dozens and dozens!' Dick replied, airily. 'We may as well have a look round, I suppose.'

They made their way first to the forward end of the hold, but here they were confronted by a solid bulkhead of thick planks. Even when they tapped upon it, they could get but a dull sound, as from an impassable barrier.

Dick was becoming anxious enough, as they crawled aft over the piled straw to try their luck with the further bulkhead. He realised now, for the first time, what a mistake he had made.

Again, solid, impenetrable planks confronted them, although here there was some slight reverberation, as though from an empty space beyond the bulkhead. Yet that was very little comfort, since the boys had no tools whatever with which to force a way through. They could only wait and listen until they heard some movement on the other side. Then they could make their presence in the hold known by shouts and knocks.

With this in their minds, Dick and Sandy moved their encampment, and took up their quarters close to the bulkhead, so as to be ready to knock, if they heard the slightest suspicion of a movement.

It was a terrible position, this in which they found themselves, trapped within the ship. Could they have foreseen the future, they would have wasted no time in waiting, but would have battered on that partition until they beat it down, if that were possible.

Poor Sandy, nervous and wretched with the long imprisonment, watched his brother's face anxiously. Any sign of distress on the elder boy's part would have led to an outbreak of panic from the younger. Fortunately, Dick had sufficient presence of mind to see the danger.

'It'll be all right, Sandy,' he said. 'We've got heaps of grub, you know. And whenever we make noise enough, I'm certain that we can let them know we're here. Why, we can hear them moving about and shouting on deck as plainly as possible.'

A consoling and plausible argument this, which made Sandy's disconsolate face brighten, and satisfied even cautious Dick himself.

That afternoon, the motion of the barque increased, and instead of the quick heave as she heeled over and rose to the short seas, she began to roll slowly from side to side.

Soon the boys were as ill again as ever, and, instead of moderating, the rolling became worse and worse as the night wore on. Rain began to patter on the decks above, and soon from the noise they knew that it must be falling in sheets. They could hear the wind howling in the rigging, and at last the crash and thunder of a wave, breaking aboard, gave them the first idea of what was before them.

The loud, fierce shouts of the ship's officers, and the hurried footfalls overhead, as the men ran to obey their orders, were all exaggerated fourfold to Dick and Sandy, huddled as they were close below the deck. To their excited imagination, it seemed as if they were in dire peril.

But worse was to come. One after another, the seas pounded upon the quivering timbers; the foot of the mast against which they crouched, creaked and groaned as if it were alive. The motion was simply terrible. Sometimes the barque would lie over, until she seemed almost on her beam ends, and, as the seas struck her, she shivered through and through. Then she would lift and cant, and seem to leap forward with a fearful heave.

Sick and dizzy, Dick staggered to his feet and shook his brother by the shoulder.

'We must try to make them hear us,' he groaned. 'Perhaps the ship is going down—we *must* make them hear us. Come on, Sandy, knock on the planks here—*hard!*'

Sandy tottered up, too sick to care very much whether the ship sank or floated. The two beat upon the massive bulkhead with their hands, shouted at the top of their feeble voices. But they might as well have whispered, with that storm raging around them; no sounds they made could have been heard more than a dozen yards away in the clamour; they had waited too long.

Sandy sank down again upon the straw, shivering, sick, and wretched; presently Dick followed his example. Water had begun to trickle through between the planks above, but the boys were too ill to seek for shelter.

(*Continued on page* 79.)

THE GALLANT FIFTIETH.

THE regiment of the Royal West Kents (the 50th Regiment of the Line) has been nicknamed 'The Dirty Half-Hundred' and 'The Blind Half-Hundred.'

The first of these nicknames was gained in the Peninsular War, over a century ago, when the regiment distinguished itself at Vimiera, and the men's faces (as an eye-witness recalls) were 'begrimed with powder as black as their own lapels.'

It was at Vimiera, too, that the West Kents won for themselves the proud title of 'The Gallant Fiftieth,' a name which might be well applied to this 'magnificent regiment'—as Viscount French has styled it.

A few years earlier, in Egypt, the regiment had been dubbed 'The Blind Half-Hundred,' because a large number of its men suffered from ophthalmia. E. D.

'THE WORK THAT'S NEAREST.'

PETER MACLANE woke to find the rain beating in at his window. It was Midsummer Day and a mid-term holiday. His joy, however, was not as great as it might have been, for a bigger disappointment than the weather had damped his spirits. Until the evening before, he and his mother had been expecting his father home on leave from France that day. A telegram had dashed their hopes and spoilt the plans they had made. Still, a whole day's holiday in term-time is not to be despised, so Peter did not waste over-much time in thinking of what might have been, but determined to enjoy what was.

This was not his first experience of cancelled leave, so he had had another plan in reserve. He and a friend, Bob Henderson, had arranged, if things took the course they now had taken, to spend the day in the mountains which lay behind the town. First-rate fishing was to be had in the streams and lakes there, and Peter's father had taught both boys to cast a fly with skill.

As he dressed, the rain gradually stopped, and Peter saw a patch of blue appear in the sky. 'I guess it's going to be a jolly day after all,' he muttered, glancing at his calendar. It was one of those with a leaf for every day, and he had marked June 24th with a red ring. Every date had a motto written underneath it, and although I am afraid he rarely read it, the one this morning did attract his attention. It ran thus:

'Do the work that's nearest, though it's dull at whiles;
Helping, when you meet them, lame dogs over stiles.'

'Funny thing that,' he mused, 'the kennel's the only place for a lame dog.' When he came down, his mother had not yet appeared; so he ran out and chatted with Knowles, the gardener. The latter prided himself upon being something of a thinker, so Peter submitted the proverb to him.

'Stands to reason that men who have most to do with Nature, and sees her workings in the earth, should be best fitted to deal with the problems of life,' began Knowles. 'Well, Master Peter, as far as I can see, it don't really refer to lame dogs or stiles at all. Help them that needs it when you see them. That's the meaning I sets upon it, only you've got it in more flowery language.' Peter thought the old man was right, and as his mother called him then, he ran in.

It was about half an hour later that not only Bob, but with him his elder brother Hildred arrived. Hildred was held in great admiration by both the younger boys, for he was a first-rate athlete and sportsman, and there was hardly a stone or cranny in the district that he did not know, or a pool for which he could not advise the best fly. Peter's mother had packed a scrumptious basket of food, and the trio started in great spirits.

As the morning advanced the weather belied its early threat of rain; the sky became bluer and the sun hotter every minute, and the party had not reached their destination (a certain lake) when they felt the need of refreshment.

They sat down, therefore, on the mountain-side, but had scarcely opened their baskets when they saw an old woman making her way, very unsteadily, down the track. In either hand she had a stick, but it seemed that even with that help she might fall at any minute.

'My hat! if it isn't old Nana,' exclaimed Peter, springing up and starting to meet her.

'Old Nana' had been nurse to Peter's father when he was a child. She had married a quarryman who took her to live in a cottage on the mountain-side. She was a widow now, and her two sons were away at the War; but although her friends had done their utmost to persuade her to move nearer the town, she would listen to none of them, but said she was determined to die in the place to which she had come as a bride. Fortunately she had a very kind neighbour, for, crippled with rheumatism as she was, she seldom ventured out now, and never alone.

Peter learnt that the neighbour had started early that morning for the town, and that, soon after she had gone, a telegram had come for Nana, telling her that her eldest son had been wounded, though not seriously. 'I'm on me way to your mother now, Master Peter, to get her to take me to buy and send off a parcel of delicacies to my Tom—they tell me where he is.'

Peter begged her to return home. He said he would tell his mother in the evening, and, without a doubt, she would either send a parcel that night if Nana would write a letter to be enclosed, or she would come up to the cottage to receive instructions from the old woman herself the next morning.

But Nana was obdurate. 'I've saved my money since the beginning of the War against this,' she said, 'and no one is going to turn me. I'm safe enough on my legs, or shall be when I be used to it'—and she proceeded on her way.

After a step or two, however, she stumbled and, had not the boy's arm been ready with help, would assuredly have fallen. The circumstance gave birth to an unwelcome thought in Peter's mind. As he could not persuade her to return, ought he to see her safely to his mother's house? Surely she would be all right; if he went, the best part of the day would be gone before he could rejoin his companions.

A struggle was going on in his mind. When Bob's voice called, 'Hurry up, Peter, here are crab sandwiches!' he half put out his hand to say good-bye to Nana. But as he did so, the motto flashed across his brain. Surely this was what it meant.

Smothering a sigh and trying his hardest to seem as though he did not mind, he told her to wait an instant while he explained to his friends and arranged to meet them later, for he was going with her.

It was a slow and weary trudge. Nana took his arm, and did not lean lightly; it was with a feeling of relief,

"Had not the boy's arm been ready with help, she would assuredly have fallen."

therefore, that Peter saw not only his home in sight, but also his mother talking to a telegraph boy in the drive. But can you imagine his wonder and delight when, having told his story, he learnt that his father had got his leave after all, was crossing the Channel that night, and that when they had done all they could for Nana, he and his mother were to go up to London, to meet the soldier there the following morning.

As he sat in the express, racing towards the great city, Peter felt that the 'work that's nearest' may be dull, but may sometimes lead to the most exciting happenings in the world.

"Cathie held her breath, and pulled the curtain tighter round her."

'A QUEER FISH.'

MOST people thought that Cathie Freeman was just a little girl of twelve years old. Really, she was quite, quite grown-up—at least she always felt so. It does make one terribly old for one's age to have four younger brothers and sisters and no mother. And Father was so particularly clever and busy that he was really like another child himself.

So if Baby held her breath till her face turned purple, or Rupert kicked Rosie, or Billy swallowed a button, or

father lost his fountain-pen, it was always Cathie who had to put things right.

Of course, if Father had thought of it, he would have engaged a governess or a nurse, but then he never *did* think of ordinary things like that himself, and Cathie was so careful to keep the children from bothering him, that often he scarcely remembered they were in the house.

Then came the voyage to Egypt, and it was really a wonder that poor Cathie's soft fair hair did not turn quite white with worry and anxiety.

Rupert and Rosie and Billy and Baby were troublesome enough on land; at sea—well, words won't describe their troublesomeness.

There are so many dangerous places on board ship too, and Cathie never felt safe about them. She was always expecting one or other to fall overboard, or break their arms and legs climbing the wire ladders, or squeeze out of a porthole when their little sister was not looking.

For Cathie was very small for her age—smaller than nine-year old Rupert—and that made it all the more difficult.

Then she felt responsible for Father's dispatch case. It was not very big, but tremendously important; Father had spoken to her about it the day they came on board the *Marina*.

'If I lost the papers in that case, Cathie,' he said, 'it would mean ruin to me, and perhaps to England too!'

He ruffled up his hair as he spoke, in a worried way, and locked up the case in his overland trunk, whilst Cathie watched him seriously.

It would have been much better to ask the ship's Purser to put the precious papers away in his safe, but Father never thought of that at the moment; it seemed so important to keep the case close by him—and of course Cathie didn't know.

After they had been on board the big steamer for nearly a week, the thing happened which made this story worth writing.

It was at Naples, where the *Marina* anchored in the Bay for a whole day, and there were ever so many exciting things to see, such as a real volcano, and all the noisy, laughing people, who came out in boats, selling coral and lava ornaments, and singing at the tops of their shrill voices.

Cathie's younger brothers and sisters were more excited and more troublesome than usual. They raced about from one side of the deck to the other until they were tired, and then, because they were tired, they grew very cross.

Cathie tried and tried to think of a quiet game which would keep them amused, until at last she had a bright idea. 'I know!' she cried. 'Wouldn't you love to fish over the side? I expect there are heaps of fishes in the sea here.'

Now this was something they could not do when the steamer was moving, and they all wanted to begin at once, so that Cathie were kept very busy for the next ten minutes in getting things ready. She fetched string and bent pins, and she baited each hook with a big piece of banana, which Rupert felt certain would attract the fishes.

Then she settled all four children in a row on the deck, but not too close together for fear of quarrelling, and made them dangle their lines down between the rails.

'Directly you feel anything dragging at the string,' she told them, 'you must pull and pull and pull, because that will be a bite.'

'What's a bite?' inquired Billy.

'A bite's a fish.'

'A whale?' Billy always liked to be very exact.

'How could you pull up a whale, silly?' returned Rupert scornfully. 'You couldn't catch anything bigger than a whiting!'

'With his tail in his mouth?' Billy asked, and Cathie had to explain that whitings didn't live in the sea like that.

At last they had really settled down to this beautifully quiet game, and Cathie thought that she might go downstairs and fetch a book for herself from the cabin.

She passed her father, reading in a long deck-chair, with a note-book and a fountain-pen in his hand, and went on down the india-rubbery smelling stairs.

Father's cabin and the one which Rupert and Billy shared were only divided from each other by red curtains. Cathie's book was in the inner one, where the boys slept. She had just found it, after a long search, when she heard some one in the outer cabin. She peeped through the half-drawn curtains and there was a man. The little girl had never seen him before. He was tall and dark, with black eyes very close together, and something in his face frightened Cathie, so that she shrank back, pulling the curtain round to hide her.

The man turned back to the door and fastened the hook, so that no one could come into the cabins. Then he stooped and looked under the lower berth, peering into every corner.

Cathie held her breath, and pulled the curtain tighter round her, as he came towards the entrance of the inner cabin and glanced round keenly. It was lucky for once that she was so small, for the man never saw her.

He went back to the other cabin and knelt down by Father's overland trunk. Pulling out a big bunch of queer-looking keys, he unlocked it after a few minutes, and took out the dispatch case.

Cathie almost screamed, but she managed to keep from making a sound, although she turned quite sick and cold with fear. She remembered what her father had said about the papers in the dispatch case, and her heart seemed almost to stop beating. The man was fumbling with the lock; in a few moments he would have opened the case, and Cathie could think of no way to prevent him from escaping with the contents.

There was no bell in the inner cabin, so that the little girl could not ring for help; and if she shrieked, the thief would get away long before any one else came.

(*Concluded on page* 77.)

THE SILVER FOX SKIN.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Concluded from page* 59.)

THEN he pulled himself together. He was cold and worn out, but the thing was his fault and must be put right at once, otherwise Jake and he would starve. The stretch of angry water between the canoe and the boulders got wider every moment; she was drifting away fast. Throwing off his jacket, he ran savagely

across the stones, waded until he was waist-deep, and then, falling forward, began to swim. The water felt horribly cold, his limbs were cramped and sore, and his breath was hard to get, but he must overtake the canoe before she left the shelter of the point. If he did not, it would be impossible to paddle back. He swam on his side, his head going under as his left arm came out; he could see nothing and durst not lose time by turning over yet: when he did so she was still ahead, and drifting faster. He must make another effort; it was necessary that he should catch her, because he knew he could not swim back to land.

He was exhausted when he seized her gunwale and paused a moment. If he tried to pull himself on board amidships, she would probably roll over; besides, his legs went under her when he strained his arms. The only chance was that he might get in over the low stern by a handspring. He was thankful he had learned the trick at the school gymnasium—you shoved the rings down with the fore-arm as you raised yourself. He worked along to the stern and tried, but at the first attempt she lifted her bow, and sinking aft, threw him off. When he came up he clutched the slippery wood again with numbed hands and braced himself for a last effort. It must be done now or never, because his strength was nearly gone.

The stern was level with the water, and some washed in, before he was quite high enough to push down from the elbow, but with a horrible wrench and strain he managed the turn and fell head first on board, breathless and dazed. Still, he could not lie there while she drifted farther away, and struggling to his knees he took up the paddle. For a minute or two she turned round and drifted sideways, but by degrees he got control, and by and by ran her in among the boulders lower down. Jake waded out to help him through the small, white-topped waves, but Tom could not remember what he said.

They had some distance to walk back, but he found a fire of resinous wood burning in a hollow to lee of a rock, and stripped off some of his wet clothes. By-and-by Jake gave him supper, and he went to sleep with the fox-skin wrapped round him under the damp blanket.

It was raining hard when they wakened next morning, and the wet pines wailed in the wind. They got up, sore and aching, and, after a frugal breakfast, went to the canoe. Before they launched her, Tom sat down on the stones and looked at the forest. It was choked and tangled by undergrowth and fallen trees, and ran up, steep as a roof, to the rocks that loomed through the mist. The beach was a narrow strip of boulders, strewn with ragged dead branches and battered trunks, while here and there big rocks ran out into deep water. It was obviously impossible to reach the cove by land.

'Shove her off. We have got to get there,' Jake said, grimly; and they waded into the water with the canoe.

The first half-hour tried Tom hard. Every muscle in his body seemed to ache, his hands bled, and he had rubbed his knees raw by pressing on the bottom of the craft. It was horribly painful to swing the paddle, but the wind was right ahead, and he must use all his strength. By-and-by, however, the steady movement hurt him less as he got warmed up, and all morning they crept on slowly, skirting the beach. At noon they tied her to a snag and lay down for an hour in the rain. Tom had felt hungry before this, but now he could not eat, and there was a curious pain in his side. Besides, they had only food enough for two or three more meals.

It cost them a resolute effort to untie from the snag; they wanted to stay there and give up the struggle, and when the canoe was loose they could not drive her past the ugly waterlogged branch for some minutes. The pitiless wind met them in the teeth; their slack muscles could not be spurred to action. By degrees they warmed up and made progress, but the afternoon passed like a nightmare. Sometimes they found a little smooth water behind a point; sometimes they paddled desperately against small foaming seas that stopped the canoe now and then and deluged them with spray. They were exhausted and breathless, but they knew if they stopped now they could not start again, and with set lips and bleeding hands they laboured on.

By degrees the mist crawled lower down the rocks and the light began to fade. It would get dark early in the bottom of the chasm among the hills. There was no sign of the cove yet, and Jake thought it was some distance off, but they must reach it before they stopped. Pete had trusted them to get there, and might be waiting, hungry and without food.

At length, Jake, who did not stop paddling, jerked his head as if to indicate something.

'See that? There, on the point!'

Tom saw a grey smudge against the rocks in the distance.

'It looks like smoke,' he said doubtfully; 'but perhaps it's mist.'

'It *is* smoke,' Jake declared, a few minutes later. 'Pete's there. Shove her along!'

Tom came near to dropping his paddle overboard in his excitement, but clutched it fast in time, and they crept forward, a little faster. When they reached the gravel to lee of the point they could hardly get out of the canoe, but Pete came down to meet them and pulled her up.

'Well,' he said, 'you look as if you'd been up against it pretty hard, and I allow I was kind of anxious when I saw she was blowing fresh. But you made it—you made it all right! You're sure some pair of pups.'

'Quit talking, and cook supper,' Jake replied. 'If we hadn't made it, you'd have got none. Still, we did hustle a bit; I reckon you couldn't live long on your own fat.'

Pete, who was very lean, grinned at him and carried the load up the beach.

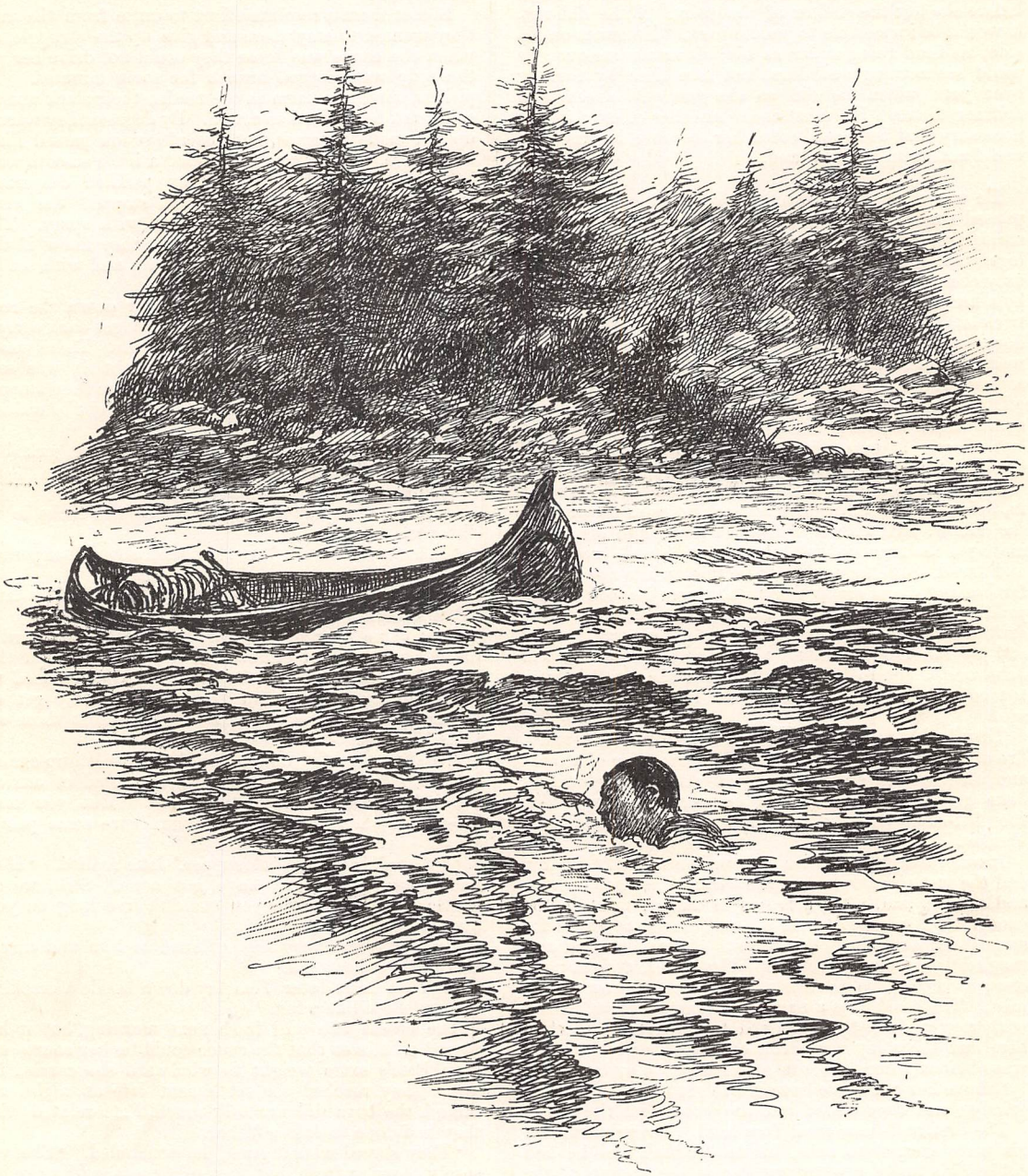
Half an hour later Tom lay down beside a crackling fire and slept like a log.

The breeze was still fresh next morning, but it had veered a little so that the canoe could lie her course, and with Pete's extra weight to windward she carried her sail. They reached the settlement late at night, and though the boys did not talk much, Pete related what they had done to Jake's father.

'They stayed with it good,' he concluded. 'She was surely blowing fresh, but they told me they'd make the cove, and they did. Well, that's what one would have expected. I like those lads! Next time I go prospecting I'll take them along.'

'We'll see,' said Mr. Winthrop, smiling. 'One adventure of the kind they've had is enough for a while.'

HAROLD BINDLOSS.



"He swam on his side, his head going under as his left arm came out."

"Mikor, at his post of observation on the other side of the fence, felt his heart beat rapidly."

THE BURIED JAR.

Founded on Fact.

THE Albanians are a fine race of people, upright and noble in mind as well as in body, but their history has been one of persecution and oppression from the very earliest times, and their neighbours, the Turks, have long been among their most bitter and powerful enemies.

For many centuries past a colony of Turks has established itself in Albania, and gradually amassed a great portion of the riches of the land, so that many of the natives are obliged to live in a state of extreme poverty and simplicity. Yet these very Turks, however shamefully they may abuse the chivalrous character of the Albanians, know how to estimate their stirling qualities, as may be seen by the fact that they are only too glad to place an Albanian in any position of trust, and that they rely implicitly on his sense of honour without ever being deceived.

Some time ago, when the little country was in a very disturbed state, through the presence of a horde of Turkish bandits, who did not even respect the property of their own race, an Albanian peasant, named Mikor, fell into a state of deep despair. He was quite unable to find work, and his wife and children seemed likely to die of starvation. Their relations were almost as badly off as themselves, the winter season was approaching, and every day found Mikor in a more hopeless frame of mind than the last. Not that he allowed himself to betray his sadness; on the contrary, he always managed to find a cheerful word on returning from his vain quests after employment, and to call up a smile on the pinched faces of his dark-eyed children, in spite of their ever-present hunger. But he lay awake night after night, face to face with the misery of his position, and pondering over the possibility of finding a meal for the following day.

Tormented by these thoughts and unable to lie still any longer, Mikor crept out of his cottage one dark night, and went into the little garden to breathe more freely. It was a long, narrow strip of ground, abutting on a field on the one side and fenced in with a wooden paling on the other. Beyond this paling lay the orchard and garden of a certain Turk, named Ibrahim, a rich but miserly grain merchant, who lived with his brother Mahmoud in the stone house overlooking the garden. The brothers were in constant anxiety lest the children of the neighbourhood, especially those of Mikor, might be tempted to rob their fruit-trees; so they had had the original paling raised to a height of some seven or eight feet to protect the boundary line. A rough bench had been set up beside it in Mikor's garden, and here the poor man sank down, after taking a few turns in the darkness.

Heedless of the chill air, he remained lost in thought, until the sound of voices, at first indistinct, but gradually more and more unmistakable, broke upon his ear.

He sat up and listened attentively, and presently a chink of light appeared outlined on the fence for an instant, giving sufficient proof of the fact that some one was astir in the neighbouring garden. When another crack of light caught his attention at another point of the paling Mikor hurried to the spot, and found that it came from a crack in the wood, through which he was able to see the form of a tall man, standing with his back towards the fence and holding a lighted lantern.

Presently the man turned and held up the light, thus revealing the presence of a second man, who appeared to be carrying a pot or earthenware jar. To his great surprise, Mikor recognised his two neighbours, and saw that they were evidently searching for a certain spot in the orchard. The elder man carried a spade in his left hand, and spoke in a low, trembling voice, so that Mikor could barely hear what he was saying.

'Here we are,' exclaimed Ibrahim after some hurried walking to and fro; 'this is the place. You see it is half-way between the two gnarled trees, directly beneath the overhanging branch of the large cherry-tree. Take the light and let me begin to dig. The ground is hard, and I am stronger than you.'

So saying, the sturdy old Turk struck the spade into the ground and began to dig with all his might.

'Let me take a turn,' exclaimed his brother, after a few minutes. 'We must make a very deep hole, and then——'

Mikor did not catch the rest of the sentence, but the exchange was made, and the digging went on in silence.

'There, that will do, Mahmoud,' broke in the elder man. 'Give me a hand with the jar—what a weight it is, to be sure!—so that we can lower it carefully.'

The lantern, placed on the ground now, lighted up the eager faces and long beards of the two men as they knelt on the damp ground and clutched the handles of the jar.

'Is the lid well screwed down?' asked the one.

In reply, Ibrahim tried to open the jar, and the lid came off in his hand.

'Stupid!' he growled. 'Here is some string; it must be tied on.'

Mikor, at his post of observation on the other side of the fence, felt his heart beat rapidly and his face flush when the lid was raised, for the jar was filled to the brim with coins of gold. And all this wealth was going to be buried in the earth—buried in the cold, unfeeling earth—while he and his family were on the brink of starvation! Fierce, wild thoughts rushed through his brain while the brothers lowered the jar into the hole, put back the earth, and carefully stamped down the traces of their work.

'After all, I think it will be safer here than anywhere,' remarked Ibrahim. 'Even if the bandits were to search the orchard through, it is very unlikely that they would hit on the right spot. And when we come back we can dig it up after all is safe again. Ah! it is beginning to rain already. All the better; there will be no traces left in half an hour's time.'

With these words, the men turned away. Mikor heard them close the door behind them on entering the house; then all was silent once more.

Trembling from head to foot with cold and excitement, Mikor returned to the cottage and to his bed, feeling like a man in a strange, fascinating dream. The jar of gold danced before his eyes. Look where he might, close his eyes, open them, the jar of gold was always there, while something seemed to say to him: 'Wait till they are gone; then dig it up, and make good use of their money. You need it; they do not. And if they miss it, they will think the bandits have taken it; and, besides, they would never dare to make it known that they keep so much wealth in their house!'

'Thief! thief!' Mikor started up and looked about him. No, it was all fancy, sheer fancy; no voice had uttered the word, the horrible word, that had never been

known in his family. But the children—the helpless little ones, anything rather than that they should cry for food and warmth!

In an agony of doubt and temptation, Mikor got up once more and went to the door. The first grey light of dawn was stealing across the sky, behind the distant mountains, so lofty, so strong. In some unaccountable manner they recalled to him his faith, his pride of race, and the honour of his fathers. Mikor drew a long breath, threw back his shoulders, and walked slowly, firmly to the old wooden bench.

As soon as it was fairly light the Turkish brothers were startled by a knock at their door. In fear and trembling they drew back the bolts and peeped out. What could their neighbour want at such an hour?

'Let me come in,' said Mikor earnestly. 'I have something of importance to ask you. It is this. Before you go away—I watched you through the fence last night and overheard your plans—take up the jar of gold, I beg you! I can find no work, my wife and children are starving. I went into my garden to be alone, and your light attracted my attention. I have been an honest man all my life, but I have been strongly tempted this night. That is why I have come to ask you to remove the gold. It would be easy to take it now the bandits are about.'

The brothers looked at each other in silence for a few seconds.

Then Ibrahim spoke: 'It is true, my neighbour, that you might have taken the gold and none been the wiser. You have acted well, and you shall see that we are able to value the word of a faithful man. The keeper of our warehouse has cheated us. We were about to set off in search of another. If you will take his place, it is yours from to-day, and you are responsible for all our stock.'

'Little did I expect an offer of this kind,' returned the Albanian; 'but I accept it in the spirit in which it was made. From this time forth your interests are mine, and the blessings of my children's children shall rest upon you.' C. MORLEY.

JEWELS THAT GROW ON TREES.

WHEN Aladdin was returning from the cave after he had secured the Wonderful Lamp, he stopped in the garden to observe the trees which were loaded with extraordinary fruit of different colours which eventually proved to be pearls, rubies, emeralds, diamonds, and other jewels of great value.

Every child knows that this tale is taken from *The Arabian Nights*, but it has been left to modern science to discover that part of this story is actually founded on fact.

In the cocoanut, pearls of vegetable origin have been found, corresponding in appearance and composition to the ordinary pearl found in the oyster, and from the flowers of the jasmine and the michaelia minute pearls have also been taken. A specimen of the cocoanut pearl is in the Museum of Kew Gardens.

The bamboo is another jewel-bearing plant; and in India and China an opal is sometimes found in the hollow centres of the reeds, which in the opinion of Professor Brewster, who has analysed several of them, are true opals both in composition and character. These vegetable stones do not appear to have been produced in sufficient quantities to have warranted their special cultivation. G. D. LYNCH.

BOYS OF ENGLAND THROUGH THE AGES.

II.

IN the days of Chivalry, when knights with battle-axe and lance fought for the honour of fair ladies at tournaments, a boy began the training that was necessary before he could make the vows of knighthood as soon as he was seven years of age. He then went to the castle of a knight as his page. He was taught to read, write, sing, and dance, and he had to wait upon his lord at all times of the day.

Every knight had several pages, each of whom had special duties. The boys slept two in a bed in a small room where the floor was strewn, in place of a carpet, with rushes. The windows were holes in the wall without glass, and the furniture, besides the wooden bed, consisted of a rough form and a desk or table, and perhaps also an oak frame to act as a book-case.

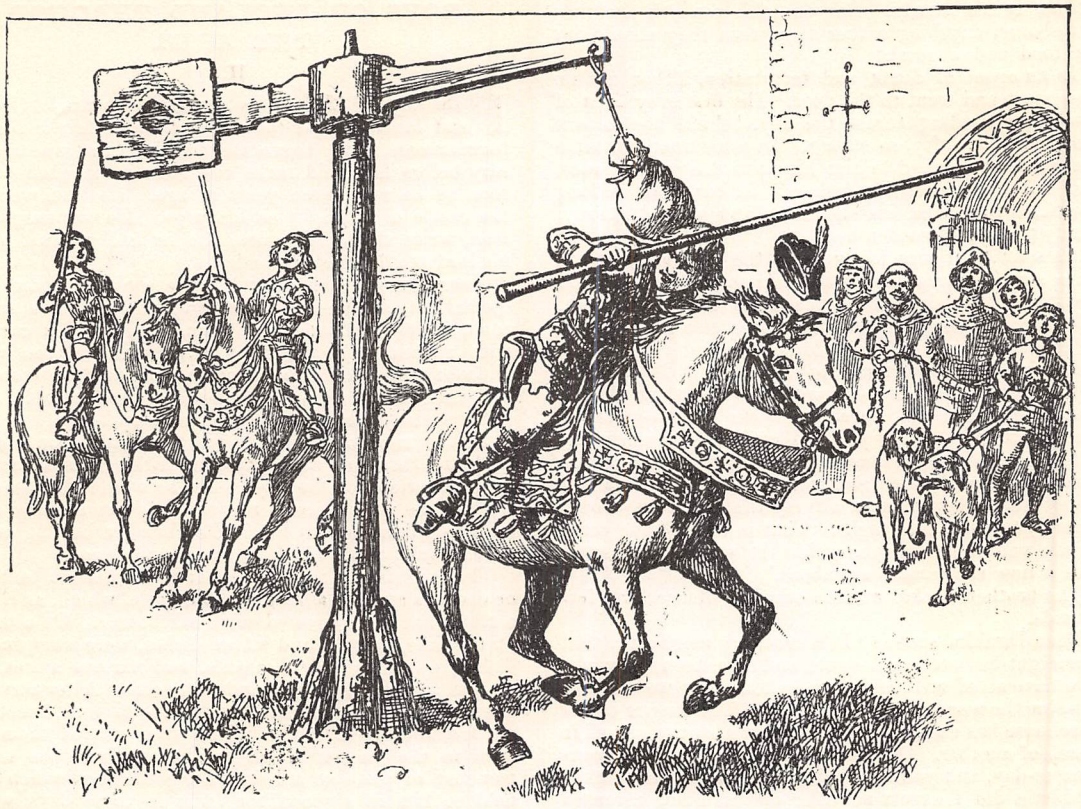
In the morning the page practised riding on horseback and thrusting with a wooden stick against a target, in preparation for the days when he would ride against his enemies with lance in rest and shield on arm. When he was summoned to his lord's chamber he put on a short scarlet cloak, black breeches, and shoes.

The knights and their ladies sat in the hall on benches or couches against a long marble table, which, as if for a cloth, had been covered with oak boards. On a table at the side, in gold and silver dishes, were sumptuous dishes, peacocks and pheasants, and various spices, as well as fine wines in gold and silver cans. After carving the meat, the page carried these first to his lord, kneeling on one knee to offer them, and then carried them in turn to the guests. Each knight ate from the same trencher or plate as a lady, taking the food which she held to him in a spoon, for forks in those days were unknown.

At all times, when not speaking to the knight, the pages had to stand gazing at the floor; but at the same time they had to be careful to listen for commands, for if they were for a second inattentive, the lord himself would prick them with a goad, or hand them over to an esquire, to be 'truly belashed till they do amend.'

One of the most important duties of these pages was to taste both food and drink before it was set upon the table, for fear less some treacherous enemy should have poisoned it. On one occasion a knight went hunting in a forest, and in the evening went to dine at an inn. His pages went in front, and strewed the floor of his chamber with new rushes, and hung green leaves on the walls, to give the place an appearance of coolness in the hot evening. The knight then called for water to wash in, and two pages carried forward a silver basin and a towel. While his hands were in the cold water he was taken suddenly ill, and a few hours later he died. His death was entirely the result of illness, and had nothing to do with the water in which he had been washing; but the two pages knew that they were certain to be accused of having brought poisoned water, and therefore to prove their innocence they had to take the basin between them, and in the presence of all the squires and men-at-arms, to drink its contents.

After a meal, the pages cleared away the empty dishes, and put down the table and its trestles; but when that was done, in recognition of their superiority over the ordinary attendants and men-at-arms, they



"In preparation for the days when he would ride against his enemies."

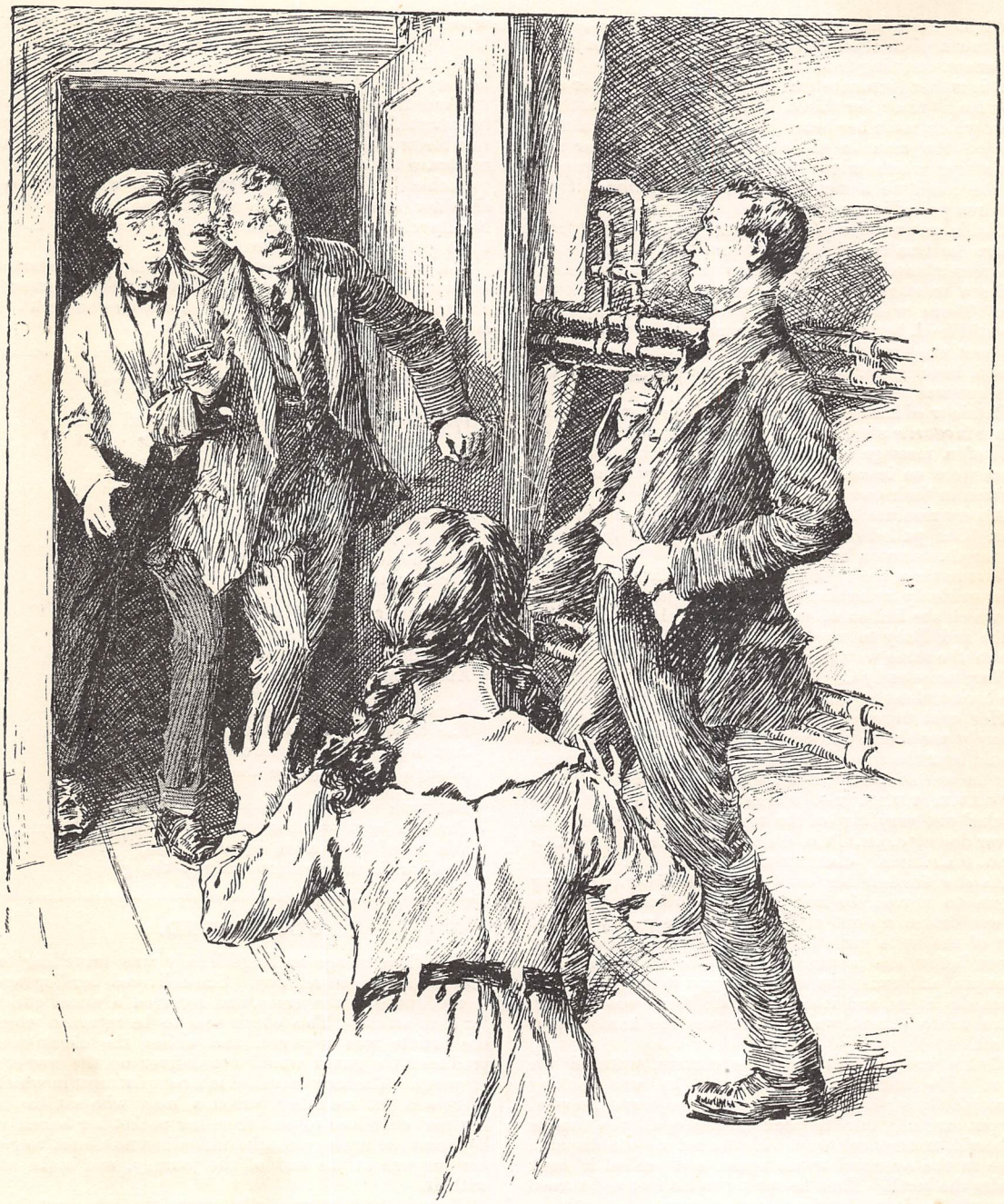
joined in the singing or dancing and games of chess, with which the knight and his guests were entertained. Later other pages had to make the knight's bed, and light him to his chamber with torches.

In time of war, one or two of the elder pages went with their lord to battle, carrying his spear and helmet, and holding his stirrup, or the bridle of his horse, whenever he dismounted. A knight would never fight against a page, and accordingly the boys of either side fought against each other. But always it was the duty of a page to render personal service to his lord, and often when the knight rode at the head of his company of esquires, archers, and men-at-arms, it was the pages who rode immediately behind him as his nearest escort.

A story is told by Sir John Froissart, the knight-chronicler of those days—of how two pages suffered severely because of their closeness to their master. During one of the wars in France, this knight was riding through a forest with his company, when a man, bareheaded, with naked feet, and clothed in a coarse jerkin, rushed out from the trees and seizing the reins of his horse, cried, 'Sir Knight, ride not further: thou art betrayed!' This incident so much troubled the knight, that by the time he reached the edge of the forest he was expecting every minute to be set upon in an ambuscade and cut to pieces. Still, in accordance with the dignity of a knight, he led his men forward, with two pages immediately behind him, riding in single file. One of these pages became drowsy in the heat of the day, and as he fell asleep, the knight's spear which he was carrying fell forward until it landed with a crash on the helmet of the page in front. The knight,

"The knight charged full tilt at the two pages."

imagining that the sound came from the ambuscade which he was expecting, turned at once, drew his sword, and, seeing figures on horseback immediately



"There stood Father, with several other men behind him."

behind him, charged full tilt at the two pages, shouting to his esquires and men-at-arms, 'Advance! advance on these traitors!' When the esquires galloped forward, the knight soon realised his mistake and put back his sword. But what became of the two pages after the cudgelling they had received from the knight's sword is not told by the chronicler. G. B. COBB.

A QUEER FISH.

(*Concluded from page* 70.)

CATHIE thought and thought and thought for what seemed like hours; and in the middle of all that thinking there came a tiny tapping sound against the porthole.

At first she could not imagine what it was; then she saw a piece of string, with a bent pin and a lump of banana dangling from the end of it.

It is rather fortunate that Cathie *was* old for her age. You see, it made her think. She thought of something now, which made her heart beat so fast that she almost fancied the man in the other cabin would hear it—something which might possibly save Father's papers. If she could tie a message to the fishing-line; if the children pulled it up and gave it to Father——

Cathie was not very far from the porthole, and from where he was the thief could not see it. But now she remembered that she had no pencil with which to write a message, and she dared not move to look for one. There was plenty of paper in the book which she still held, but that alone was no use. And at any moment the line might be drawn up, and her chance would have gone, for she dared not touch it till the message was ready.

Cathie tried hard to think what the heroes and heroines in her favourite stories would have done. Once she had read of a message scratched on a leaf; but of course there were no leaves here. Other times prisoners had written in their own blood . . .

A very resolute look came over Cathie's small, pale face. She pulled out a long pin from her frock and prepared to scratch her wrist.

Just in time, the sight of the pin gave her a new idea. She suddenly remembered the kindergarten pictures, of which she had so often pricked out the outlines for Billy and Baby to work in coloured wools. Couldn't she in the same way prick Father a message?

Very noiselessly Cathie tore one of the flyleaves from the book and set to work.

Her cold fingers trembled so much that she could scarcely use them; she was terribly afraid that the man would hear the tiny clicking sound which the pin made. But he was still busy with the dispatch case.

'G.I.V.E. T.H.I.S. T.O. F.A.T.H.E.R. A.T. O.N.C.E.,' she pricked out very big on the top of the page, and then, lower down, 'C.O.M.E. T.O. C.A.B.I.N. T.H.I.E.F. S.T.E.A.L.-I.N.G. P.A.P.E.R.S. C.A.T.H.I.E.'

As she finished her own name, the dangling string began to move; she had just time to catch it before it was drawn up out of reach. It was nearly tugged out of the little girl's hands by the impatient children above before she managed to stick the paper on to the bent pin, and twist the string around it to hold it firm. Then she let go, and it disappeared; there was nothing more to do except wait, which was the hardest part of all.

Cathie, crouching behind the curtain, watched the man. He had opened the case; he was looking through the papers; some of them he returned, several he put carefully into his pocket, smiling all the time in a horrid, triumphant way. He locked up the dispatch case in the overland trunk again, and pushed it back under the berth. Then he sprang to his feet and turned towards the door. And nobody had come.

Cathie made up her mind that she must somehow stop him from escaping at all costs. She would rush out, catch hold of him, and scream and scream for help.

He unhooked the door, just as some one opened it from the outside.

A cry of joy and relief broke from poor Cathie. There stood Father, with several other men behind him.

The thief turned out to be a very well-known criminal, who had been employed to steal the important papers from Father, before he could reach Egypt.

Father told Cathie all this as he sat in the cabin, holding her tightly in his arms.

'And Baby is as pleased as possible with the fish he caught,' he said. 'And you—you saved me from terrible trouble, and did a big thing for England, too, my brave little girl. I shall never forget it.'

Cathie lay comfortably against Father's nice broad shoulder, and wiped her eyes with Father's nice large handkerchief. It was rather jolly to feel quite like a little girl for a few minutes.

But suddenly she remembered something, and started up, with a very serious look on her face. 'Oh, Father!' she cried. 'The children are by themselves on deck! I *must* go and see that they are all right.'

NANCY'S LEAF FANCY.

THE wayside leaves are green, and kind,
They shade the birds from sun and wind,
And when the weather's turning cold,
Oh! then they change to brown and gold,

Come dropping down in tens and twos,
For us to scuffle with our shoes,—
All the school-going girls and boys—
Wading along with a rustling noise.

When winds are wild, and days are short,
Bravely the leaves keep up their sport:
In circus-rings they twirl about,
And races run, a merry rout;

Because they're *really*—some folk say,—
The tiniest horses, brown and grey,
Just big enough for Elves to stride,—
Though none may see them as they ride,—

But true it is, for one night going
Through dark wood-ways, with no wind blowing,
We heard the leaves, in cavalcades,
Rush with their riders through the glades!

OUTWITTED.

SOME years ago an English lady was travelling on an American railway. She delivered her luggage to the guard of the train, and received a metal check for each article. This check was to be returned when the article was required, and unless the check was produced, the guard would not deliver up the owner's property. The lady travelled in a compartment in which there was but one other person, a man who sat beside her, and contrived to pick from her pocket her bunch of keys and the luggage checks, intending no doubt to get her luggage at the end of the journey, and make off with it.

Though the lady was fully aware that the man had picked her pocket, she was afraid to say anything to him, as they were alone. She remained silent until the train reached its destination. When, however, the guard put his head into the carriage, and inquired for the luggage checks, she quickly pointed to her companion, and said, 'He has my checks.' The man was so taken aback that he delivered up the checks and keys without a word, and the lady obtained her luggage. W. A. Atkinson.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 66.)

EVEN on the deck of a sailing-ship in a gale of wind, it seems as if the worst powers of nature were let loose and striving to destroy her. But there one has the fierce joy of the fighting, and the wild excitement of the hurrying seas and the tearing squalls.

Below, the terrors are doubled and trebled, and the battle is one-sided and hopeless. The wind shrieks and whistles as it never howls ashore; ropes slat and hammer against the spars, and the crash of a breaking wave seems as if it must stave in the stoutest timbers.

In a huge iron ship, such a storm is bad, when one lies listening from the snug shelter of one's berth. Think, then, what it must have been to two small boys imprisoned beneath the deck of an old, weather-worn wooden vessel.

Every plank, every beam in her, seemed to cry out and groan in agony, as they were pounded and beaten by the furious seas. The straining mast jerked and laboured in its step. Above, the wind howled and roared, sometimes booming low, with a deep organ note, sometimes shrieking with the reckless madness of fiends let loose.

The thunder of each sea as it climbed the bulwarks and struck the decks was deafening. And above it all sounded the even clap—clap—clap of a rope strained against a spar.

In spite of the appalling leaps and dives of the tortured ship, the boys at last lost their sickness in their terror. They lay huddled together in a hollow in the straw, shivering in their wet and clammy clothes, deafened by the awful, unceasing din. It was pitchy dark, and even when the dawn came tardily, it was but a faint glimmer that filtered through the distant port.

Suddenly, the barque seemed to stand still, as if she faltered at what she knew must come. A squall, heavier than any before, struck her and laid her flat . . . a loud shout . . . a shrill whistle . . . Then a crash, the creaks and groans of rending timber, and a smashing blow against the ship's side that threatened to beat her in.

The poor little vessel rolled heavily as she came up to the wind; then there was a lull, broken by the fierce shouts and cries of frightened and excited men.

And a new sound broke on the terrified ears of the cowering boys. Clank — clank — clank — slowly and evenly the strokes rang, beating a never-ending time to the tune of the wind and sea.

CHAPTER V.

Clank—clank—clank! . . . At first the boys could not make out what the strange sound was, but, at last the noise of gurgling water told them its meaning pretty plainly. It was the crew of the *Sea Rover* working at the pumps.

The knowledge chilled Dick and Sandy with a new and horrible fear. Perhaps the ship was sinking at that moment, perhaps it would go down, whilst they lay cooped up like drowning mice, totally unable to make their presence known. It was a horrible thought, and the younger boy buried his face in his elbow, trying hard not to let Dick hear his smothered sobs.

For hour after hour the ominous sounds continued, and all the time the tempest howled and roared, and the seas beat upon the decks above oftener and with greater force.

The mizzen-mast of the ship passed through the hold, close against the bulkhead by which the boys lay. The lower portion of the mainmast could be seen at the fore end of the hold. Bales of straw were piled round it, but some four feet were visible between the top of the cargo and the deck. And suddenly Sandy, peering through the dusk, cried out in terror.

'Look, Dick, look! The mast! It's breaking in half!'

The boy was right. A fierce squall had struck the ship, and, without any warning, they saw the huge spar open and split like a broken bamboo. A fearful crash told them that the mainmast had gone by the board. The noise of the pumping ceased, and the shouts and cries of the crew sounded shrill and clear. The din was redoubled, but instead of sounding far off and muffled, it seemed as if it had suddenly come quite near.

The reason was soon apparent. Where the mast had fallen was a great rent in the deck above, through which the sea was streaming in a perfect cataract as the ship rolled. The water soaked into the soft straw of the cargo, but it was in great volume, and the boys dared not approach too close to the opening lest they should be drowned or, at least, flung back and injured by the weight of water.

They could hear all the orders now and imagine vividly what went forward. First, there was a cry to clear the wreck, and the sharp strokes of axes told them that the work was quickly done.

Some one called hoarsely to 'stand clear!'—the mizzen topmast was coming down—and a crash just above their heads told them that he had spoken the truth.

The barque was now rolling terribly, she was in the trough of the sea, and every wave threatened to overwhelm her. Still, the water poured through the opening in the deck, and as the clank of the pumps recommenced, a tarpaulin was brought with which to cover the hole.

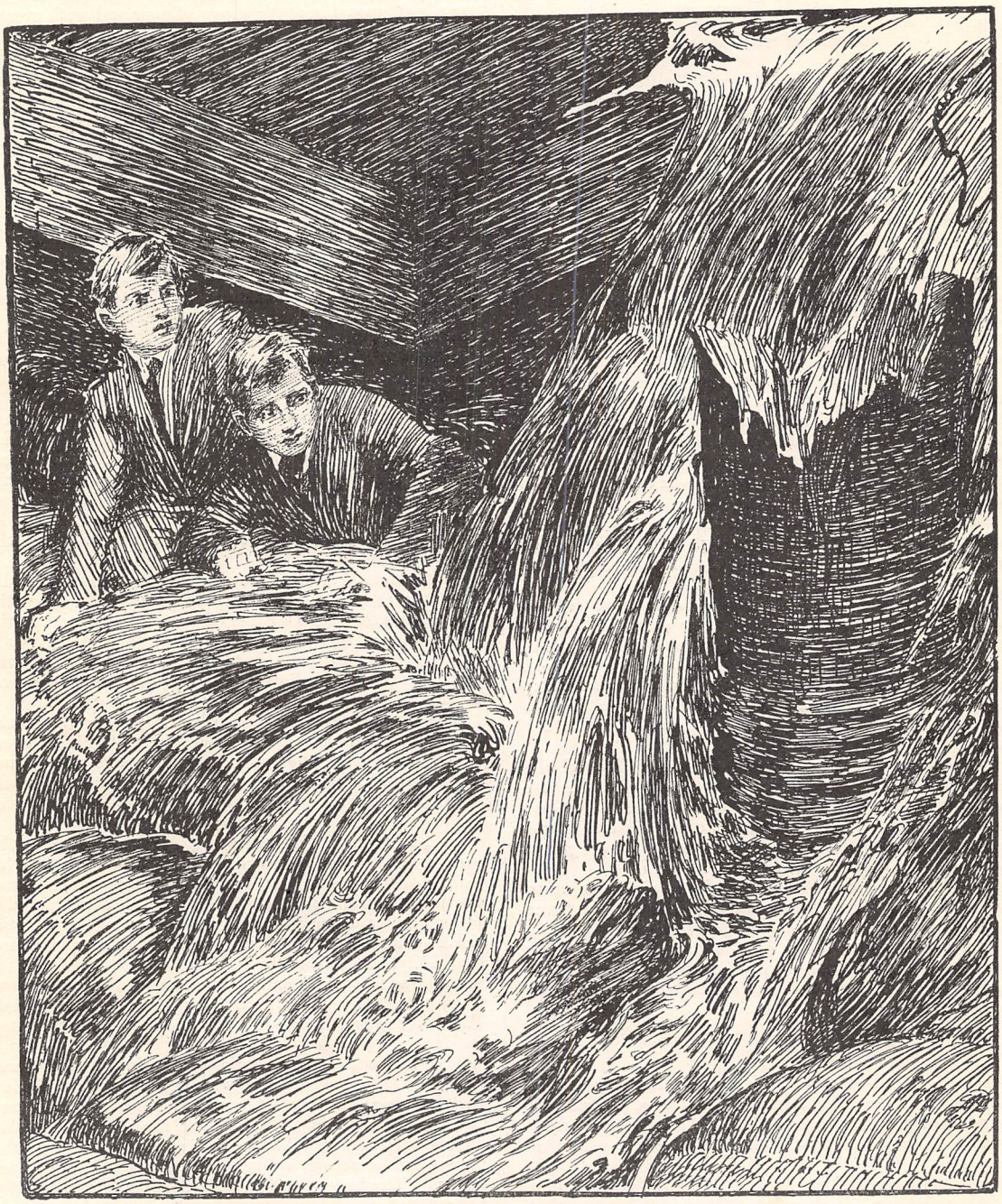
Yet, even now, it was quite light below, and the nearness of human voices relieved the boys of that awful feeling of loneliness that had been their worst terror. As time went on, the noise became less deafening, and it seemed as if the hurricane were moderating. But still clank—clank went the pumps, and the barque rolled sluggishly, like a dead thing.

Dick found some biscuits and persuaded Sandy to eat a little, for they were both faint from want of food. Then, weary and worn-out with cold and terror, they fell into a heavy sleep.

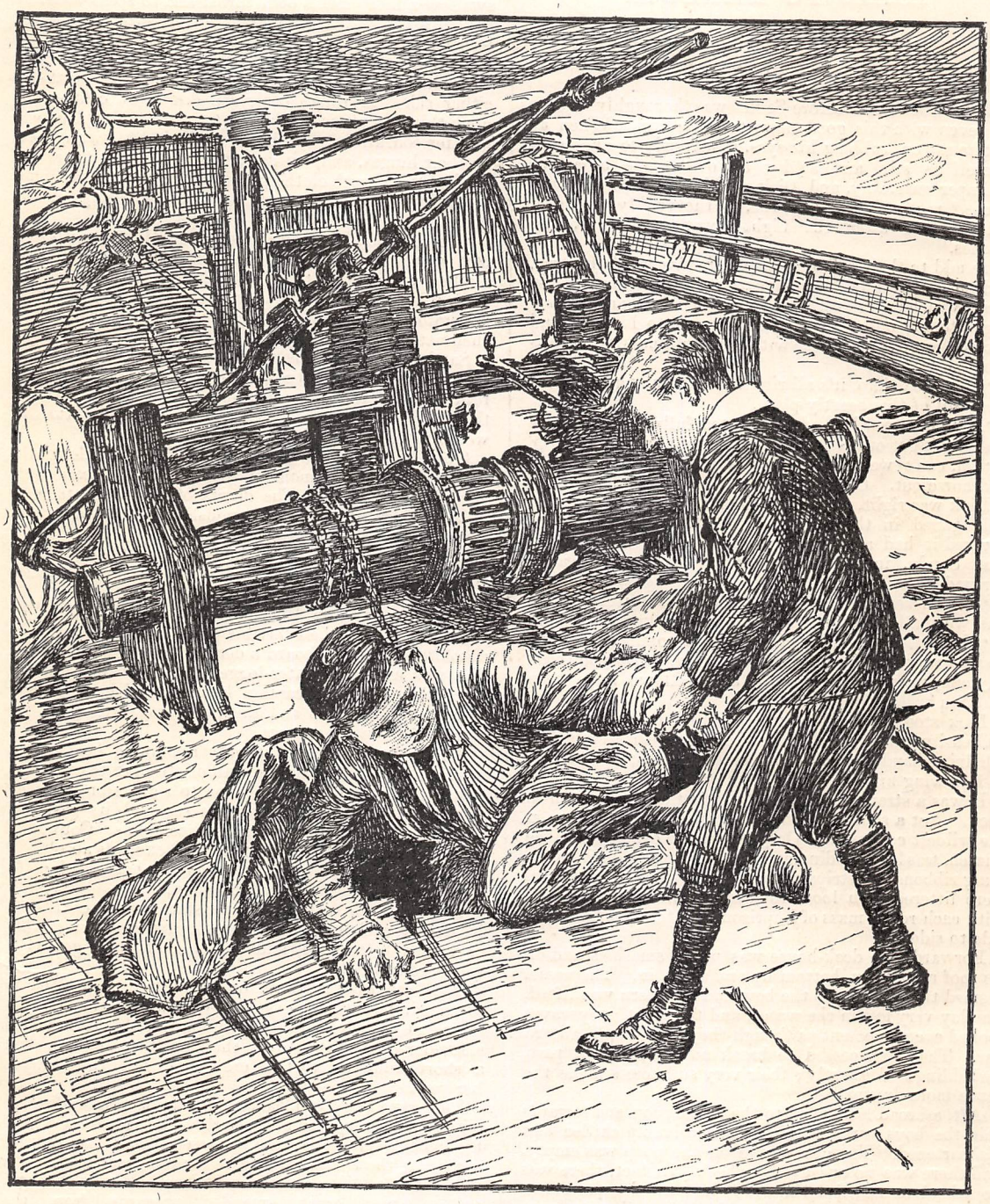
They had been utterly and unnaturally exhausted, and it was again broad daylight when Dick awoke. He lay still, blinking until he had come to some remembrance of his whereabouts, then listened for the beat of the pumps. It had ceased; there was no sound but the flapping of loose canvas and the gurgle and splash of water. The barque still rolled heavily, but evidently the sea had gone down, and the gale had blown itself out.

'Here, Sandy, wake up!' Dick shouted, shaking the younger boy by the shoulder. 'Wake up! The storm's about over!'

(*Continued on page* 82.)



"Where the mast had fallen was a great rent in the deck above."



"With the aid of a helping hand from above, his brother had little difficulty in following him."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 79.)

IT was some time before Sandy was thoroughly awake, even with this good news to rouse him. When at last he sat up, rubbing his eyes, it was only to announce himself as stiff and aching all over. He began to whimper miserably, and Dick could almost have found himself ready to do the same, so thoroughly wretched did he feel after the night spent in his soaking clothes.

To add to their troubles, they were ravenously hungry, and not one scrap of biscuit remained. This was the last straw which broke down Sandy's self-control, and the boy began to sob outright. Dick struggled to his feet and shook himself, then spoke with a cheerfulness which was decidedly forced.

'I say, old chap, it's all right. Come along, and let's clear out of this beastly place.'

'How can we?' asked Sandy, tearfully. 'You know we c-can't get out, so what's the use of t-talking?'

'Oh, can't we? Why, there's room to drive a cart and horse out. Come along!'

Dick was right, for, where the mast had stood, a great hole gaped in the deck above. The tarpaulin that covered it had already blown loose from its lashings. But Sandy, in his despondency, was not so easily persuaded.

'It's all very well, Dick,' he said. 'But if we do go out, we shall get into an awful row, you know.'

'Nonsense!' Dick retorted with a confidence which he was very far from feeling inwardly. 'Do you think any one would rag us now, after all we have been through? Up you get!'

Dick stooped, whilst Sandy climbed up on his back, and easily scrambled through the hole. With the aid of a helping hand from above his brother had little difficulty in following him.

It was a strange and desolate sight that faced them on deck. Not a soul was to be seen, and everything was in the wildest confusion. Only the stump of one mast, the mizzen, was left standing, and from its single slanting yard hung ribbons and strips of slatting canvas. The scuppers were littered with loose rope and splintered wood, and with each roll a mass of imprisoned water splashed from side to side.

Forward, the deck-house was partly smashed, and on its roof a boat lay, bottom up and stove in. The vessel seemed tilted towards the bow and her stern was lifted. She lay very low in the water, and the great, grey waves looked every moment as though they would spill aboard her. They had ceased to break now, but raced past, forbidding and ghastly; their very sullenness made the scene more dreary.

Aft, a broad ladder led to the raised poop, and towards this the boys turned, feeling inconceivably chilled and disheartened. The deck-house on the poop was empty, and there was no one at the wheel. In fact, there was no wheel at all, for the after part of the poop was swept clear; wheel-box, binnacle, and rail were gone completely.

Poor Sandy was now crying again. There was nothing more utterly desolate than a deserted ship, and an awful dread was gripping at their hearts.

'Cheer up, old man!' said Dick, trying hard to swallow a lump in his own throat and to speak steadily. 'We'll find some one down below, I'm sure. Come and let's have a look.'

They entered the deck-house and descended the cabin companion. Below was a small saloon with berths on either side. A rough table ran down the centre, and upon this was pinned a chart. Otherwise the place was in utter confusion. The doors of the berths swung loose on their hinges, and, within, one could see the floors and bunks littered with clothing and all manner of abandoned belongings. Above everything, a lamp swung; it was still burning drearily.

'I say, Sandy,' Dick managed to speak in a matter-of-fact way, 'I wish you'd have a look amongst these clothes, and see if there's anything small enough for us to wear. These wet things are getting most horribly uncomfortable, and, besides, we shall be getting rheumatism or something.'

Sandy caught at the suggestion at once, and began to rummage amongst the piles of garments, whilst Dick returned on deck alone, making some excuse. He felt that he must know the worst at once; felt, too, that he would rather be by himself when he did so.

Quickly the boy made his way forward along the littered decks. A moment more, and his fears were turned to certainty. The davits of the lifeboats were on either side of the vessel, amidships, and from each of them the falls hung, empty.

The crew had taken to the boats, and the *Sea Rover* was deserted, save by the two inexperienced and helpless boys.

For a few minutes Dick stood motionless, stunned by the realisation of their terrible predicament. They were absolutely alone on board a derelict and helpless vessel. She was certainly water-logged and probably sinking, since the crew and captain had deserted her. In any case, bereft of spars and sails, she was utterly at the mercy of the wind and sea.

As for leaving her, the only remaining boat was a wreck, nor had the boys the skill or strength to construct a raft. Their only chance was to sight some passing vessel; but those who know the sea and its vastness, will know, also, what a forlorn chance it was. Convinced as he was already in his own mind, Dick made absolutely certain that there was no one left aboard before he returned to break the news to Sandy.

The forecastle was in the same state of wild confusion. Evidently each man had hurriedly seized a few clothes or valued belongings, and the bulk of their gear was scattered at random.

The forward deck-house, on the main-deck, was badly damaged, but the ship's galley, which occupied the after-end of it, was practically uninjured. A fire still smouldered in the stove, showing that it was but a short time since the crew had left the ship to her fate.

This gave Dick an idea, and he ran aft, intending to climb the mizzen-mast and search the horizon for a sign of the boats. He soon saw, however, that the risk of ascending the rigging would be far too great to make it worth while. The mast was broken half-way through, and a great crack extended upwards from the break. The shrouds were sagging on either side; they loosened or tautened as each roll of the ship swayed the spar.

(*Continued on page* 94.)

THE DUSTMAN'S ROUNDS.

WHEN the Dustman goes his rounds in the early, early dark,
And on the little children lays his well-known finger-mark,
They stare at him quite rudely out of big, wide, baby eyes:
He will never catch them napping, however hard he tries.

When the Dustman goes his rounds just a little later on,
The very, very tinies have to Blanket Market gone:
He takes a double handful of his famous dusty gold,
And throws it in the shining eyes of ten and twelve years old.

When the Dustman goes his rounds at the last, last thing at night,
The eyes of every boy and girl, of course, are folded tight;
For should the Dustman find a child who still is not in bed,
He empties out his sack of dust upon the culprit's head.

SETTING THE FASHION.

KINGS and Queens are to be envied for at least one good reason. It is so easy for them to make people happy! All Queens, however, have not the kindly sympathy and the quick-wittedness of Queen Helena, of Italy, who, some years ago, felt very sorry for the sad plight of the coral-fishers at Torre del Greco, near Naples. Coral had gone out of fashion; nobody would buy it. The distressed coral-fishers appealed to the Queen. 'What can I do,' she thought, 'to help these poor people?' and soon she found an excellent answer to her own question. At a great court ball held at the Quirinal, the Queen created much surprise by wearing, instead of her splendid neck-ornament of pearls, a collar composed of six rows of coral. A diadem of coral and brilliants admirably set off her black hair. The result was from that evening coral came again into fashion. Old coral ornaments, hidden away for many years, re-appeared in the jewellers' windows, and were quickly carried off by eager buyers. Everybody now, following the lead of the Queen, desired to wear coral, and prosperity returned to the coral-fishers.

EYES THAT SEE:

THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.

III.—IN A HEDGE.

I AM sitting in a hedge while I write this. I have walked out into the country this still, summer morning. to see what I can find to write about of interest to you, things that perhaps you overlook, because you have never thought about them. Though it is still early in the day, it is very hot, and a blue haze hangs around the distant trees, and the fields are already seeming to *smoke*, telling us that greater heat is in store for us later in the day. An old countryman has just stopped to 'pass the time of day' with me. I remarked on the haze; his reply amused me, for he said, 'Yes, that's hate, that's what *that* is!' (Meaning heat, of course!) A light wind comes to me now and again, bringing the scent of strawberries, for the pickers are busy over yonder, with their last gathering.

I think I will tell you about this hedge; it is just an ordinary hedge to look at, bushes of hawthorn and elm, with here and there dogwood and other plants, all on a grassy bank some four to six feet high. This on one side of the road; on the other, there is scarcely any bank, and the hedge is much lower—you see this road has been cut along the side of a hill. Great elms and oaks rise from the hedge at intervals, making wonderful flickering shadows on the sunny road, and giving welcome shade to weary travellers, I among them.

Only an ordinary-looking hedge, but it has a history stretching back for hundreds of years, for it borders one of the most ancient roads in the kingdom, viz., Watling Street. I am sure you must have read in history of the great main roads the Romans built, when they occupied this land. A wonderful people these Romans, and we, with our hundreds of years of education, still appreciate their great skill in engineering. When they wanted to build a road, they took the route over hill and down dale, swaying neither to right nor left, unless they could not help it. A 'street' they called it, and places with 'street' or 'streat' in their names have generally got it from an ancient road—as, for instance, Streatham, Stretford, &c. So the ancestors of the trees, hedges, and wild flowers on this road must have seen many sights which would seem strange to us—chariots and horsemen, and warriors in warlike attire.

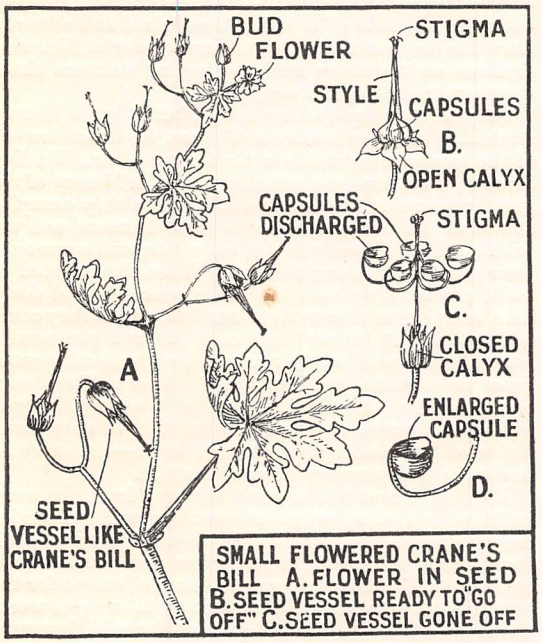
Watling Street was a great highway from the coast in those days, along which all traffic passed. Remains are even now often unearthed in the neighbouring fields, foundations of villas, Roman glass and earthenware, coins, &c. But now this road is deserted, except for the country-folk who pass this way, going to or from work. Consequently it is a wonderful haunt for wild flowers.

As I sit on this bank, I can distinctly hear a workman, some way off, slashing at the hedge with his billhook, cutting it back, for, though very pretty, its present luxuriant state keeps air and light from the crops beyond. A 'hedge' is a boundary, but it is not always of hawthorn and trees. Sometimes, as in Wales and in the north of England, it is a wall of loose stones or lumps of slate-rock. In certain parts of the country (Kent among them), on Ascension Day the officials of the different adjoining parishes and certain schoolboys go round the boundaries to see they have not been altered during the year, or to agree upon alterations. It used to be the custom at the different boundary-stones (there is one over the road, I see) to 'bump' the boys on them to make them remember where the stones were, so that they should know their position when they grew up! This part of the performance has been dropped, but the boys now carry long 'withs' (willow-twigs) with which they beat the stones. This is called 'Beating the Bounds,' an old custom which I hope will long survive.

Farmers of to-day are trying to do away with hedges (I mean hedges as *we* know them), because they are a waste of space in many cases, though for some crops they are necessary for a protection. In Kent, rows of poplars are often grown to protect the hops from the cold winds. On the Continent there are few hedges, and those very low.

From a picturesque point of view, however, I should be sorry to lose the hedges. See this charming one, with its wealth of flowers! I have just been along a

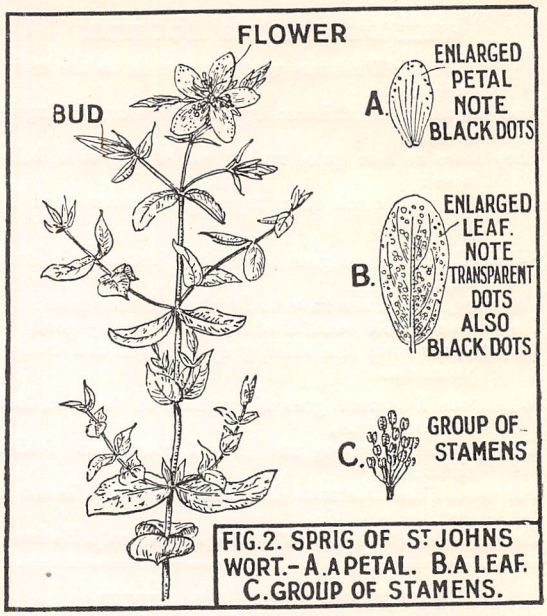
little way to see what flowers or plants of special interest I could find, and I have quite a bouquet. But I propose to describe and illustrate only such as I think will prove of particular interest. For a start, here in fig. 1, I show a very common little plant, the small purple-flowered Crane's-bill. I want you to note (at A) how like a crane's head is this flower gone to seed—thus you have



the origin of its name. Next see its curious method of discharging its seeds. At B, I show you a seed-vessel just ready to 'go off'—its calyx is open wide. At C is one 'gone off,' and its calyx has closed again. There are five little capsules at the base of B, each on a tiny thread, which runs up the style, and is attached firmly under the stigma. When this whole arrangement gets dry, those threads contract, the strain being unbearable; the threads pull the capsules (containing each a seed) up, and thus throw the seeds to quite a distance. Look for this plant (or some relative; they all behave in much the same way), and try to discharge a 'loaded' seed-vessel—it is quite good fun! All this family are near relations of our geraniums: you can prove it by examining the flower of a geranium gone to seed. You will at once see the likeness.

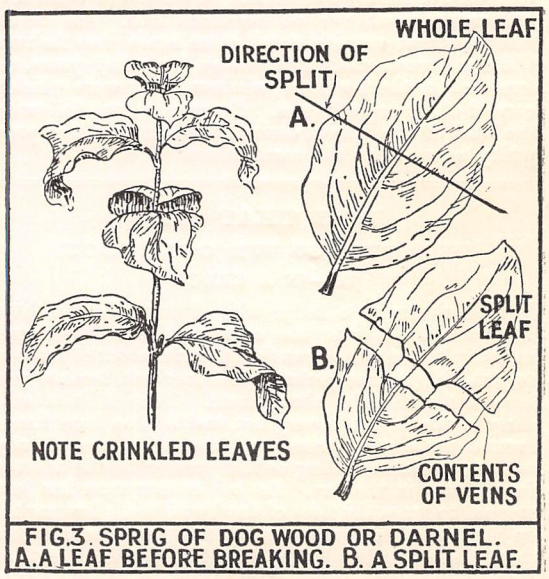
Fig. 2 is a sprig of St. John's Wort. Its clear, green foliage and bright, buttercup-yellow flowers are always attractive. But I want *you* to look more closely, to observe the tiny black spots on the petals and backs of leaves (at A and B), and also the many transparent spots in the leaves, which can be seen by holding them up to the light. Its Latin name points this out—viz., *Hypericum perforatum* (perforated with holes). Again, notice that the stamens are gathered together in three bundles (fig. 2, C), which is unusual, as they mostly spring independently from the petals or base of the flower.

A twig of Dogwood or Cornel I have gathered; it is a shrub with alternate, rather wavy leaves and well-



marked veins. Later in the year it has clusters of creamy flowers, followed by red berries which later go black. I show you a twig of leaves in fig. 3. The point of interest I want you to note is, that if you break a leaf as shown at A and B, and keep the parts about an inch apart, you can see tiny white threads connecting the ends of the veins. These threads are the contents of the veins being drawn out or stretched. They contain a tube in which the thickening is arranged like a minute spring all coiled up, and when we break it, it comes uncoiled. Look out for Dogwood and try this.

Fig. 4 shows you a sprig of Goat's Beard, a very pretty flower (a *head* of flowers really, because it is



composed of a number of florets, like a daisy or a dandelion). When open, it is as seen at A, but it shuts up very early, thus earning the name of John-go-to-bed-at-noon. Well, it was about ten o'clock when I gathered it, and it was 'in bed.' Its leaves are long and grass-like, very baggy where they clasp the stem, and also strongly marked with crimson where they clasp. The flower in seed is what I want to point out particularly. It develops a 'clock' like the dandelion, but a particularly beautiful one, for the pappus or down is very feathery and interlaces with its neighbours, making most wonderful tiny umbrellas. This gives the seed an extra chance of a long journey. At A, I show you an enlarged seed-vessel with its pappus attached. Of course each floret develops one of these, so the 'clock' is well worth seeing. The seed-vessel, too, is covered

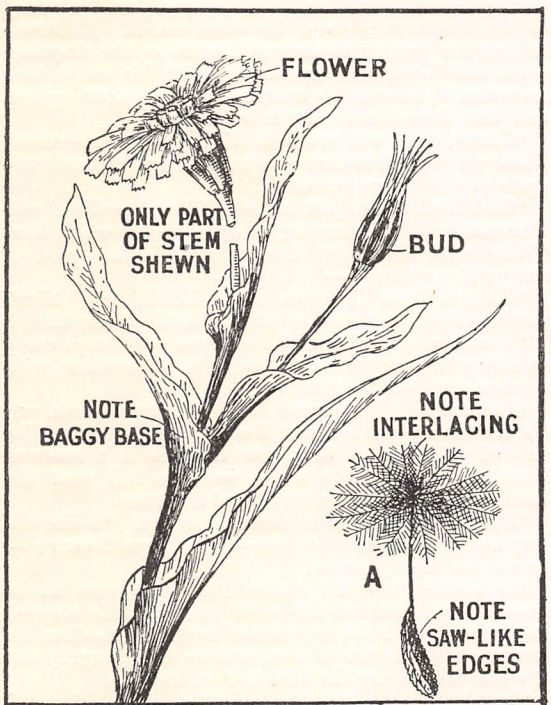


FIG.4. GOATS' BEARD. A. PAPPUS AND SEED VESSEL (ENLARGED)

with rows of saw-like teeth, quite rough to the touch. The pappus of my specimen is one and a half inches across, and the seed-vessels half-an-inch long.

Beautiful tall plants of Wormwood or Absinthe are in this hedge, showing up plainly at a distance when the breeze catches them, and exposes the backs of the leaves, which are almost white against the red stems. The flowers are not yet out, but the clusters of buds show up, being also white.

Great trails of White Bryony are festooning the hedges, being very noticeable with their large, bright green berries, which will soon be attractively red (but must be avoided, because they are poisonous). I show you a trail in fig. 5: it is very graceful, especially its long tendrils 'looking' round for a support.

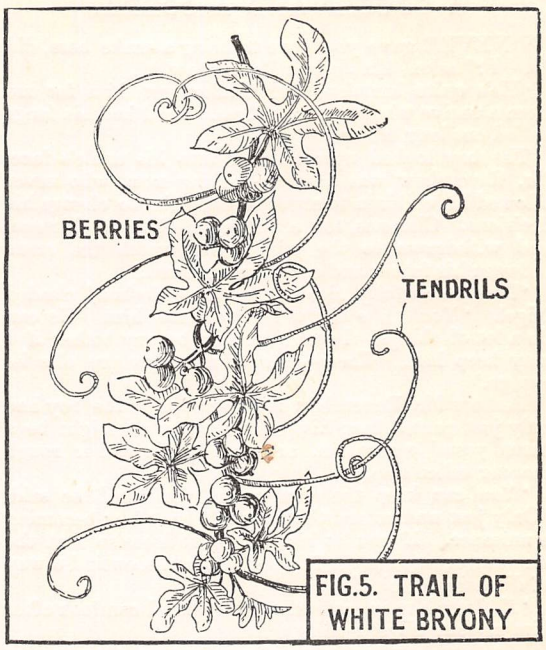


FIG.5. TRAIL OF WHITE BRYONY

Traveller's Joy or Clematis is just coming into bloom. Note its way of getting up in the world by means of its leaf-stems, which hook round any handy support (fig. 6). This is well worth examining.

Besides all these, of course, I have in my bouquet Wild Chicory, with its beautiful sky-blue flowers; Campions, large and small; Purple Mallow; Bedstraw in trails everywhere, clambering by means of its rough leaves, stems, and seed-vessels; and lovely flat clusters

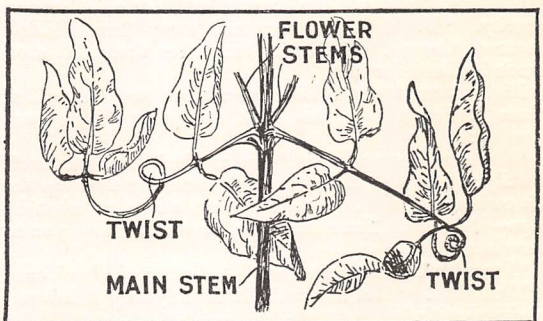


FIG.6. LEAVES OF CLEMATIS SHEWING THE LEAF STEMS TWISTING.

of the Wild Carrot, with its graceful ring of bracts under its 'cluster of clusters' of flowers (called an 'umbel'). Beautiful Marjoram I have, too, with its sweet scent, and other flowers too numerous to mention here. Go to a hedge and see what *you* can find. Do not neglect to examine the *common* flowers, for they are often the most interesting, but because they are common they are overlooked.

E. M. BARLOW.

A COUSIN AND A COBRA.

'I NEVER gave you leave to bring a snake here, did I?" asked Mr. Joshua Ravenshaw.

'He's quite harmless, sir. Father got him for me from a native who charmed cobras. He'd had his fangs pulled out long before.'

The boy looked up anxiously into his uncle's face. Mr. Ravenshaw was a severe-looking man, who never allowed his children to argue or coax him to change his decisions. Clarence, the eldest, a tall boy of thirteen, had withdrawn to the window to watch the scene between his father and cousin unobserved.

'He's an awfully nice cobra, Uncle Joshua,' pleaded Nigel. 'You'll like him when you know him. He can do a lot of things. I won't let him be any bother if I may keep him. There—there isn't anywhere else he can go.'

Perhaps Mr. Ravenshaw recollected that the boy had only just parted from his parents for what might be a three years' separation, or perhaps his rather rough manner belied him.

'You can keep the creature, if you like,' he said. 'Only just understand that I won't have him becoming a nuisance. If you let him get about loose so that the servants or any one are frightened, I can soon find a way of disposing of him.'

'I'll keep him in his box, except when I can look after him myself,' Nigel readily promised.

His face brightened with relief as he thanked his uncle, but the expression was not reflected on the countenance of his cousin Clarence.

'Clammy, poisonous-looking beast!' he muttered to his twin sister. 'What does Father let him keep it for? He wouldn't let me have that puppy Bob Clifford offered us——'

'He was afraid of it disturbing his work,' replied Hilda. 'A snake can't bark, at any rate.'

'No—biting is more his line, I should think.'

'Rajah can't bite,' said Nigel. 'You needn't be at all afraid of him.'

'Who's afraid of him, you idiot?' cried Clarence, angrily. 'You'd better keep him away from Hilda's canaries, though. If I catch him after them, I'll soon crack his head for him.'

Nigel turned upon his cousin with such a sudden blaze of ferocity in his dark eyes that Hilda was startled.

'The canaries are all safe in my bedroom,' she said, hastily; 'but I should keep him carefully shut up for his own sake, Nigel. Father always sticks to what he says—if he finds him a nuisance, he won't allow you to keep him.'

'I wouldn't let any one hurt him,' retorted Nigel, only half pacified. 'But he won't bother anybody if he's not meddled with.'

He went out into the garden without saying anything more, and took the snake with him.

'He's offended, I'm afraid,' said Hilda, looking anxiously at her brother.

'Don't care if he is—hot-tempered ass!'

The secret of Clarence's ill-humour was not any real dislike of the snake, but a determined prejudice against his newly-met cousin. He had disliked the idea of a strange boy coming to stay in the house and spoil his holidays, and though he dared utter no complaint in his father's presence, loud were the grumbles which the schoolroom walls had re-echoed, and grudging indeed was the welcome poor Nigel had received.

During the days that followed, the boys hardly became better friends. Clarence was overbearing and obstinate over every trifle, and left Nigel out of all their amusements when it was possible to do so. Hilda, though she secretly liked her cousin, usually sided against him from a sort of mistaken loyalty to Clarence.

The climax was reached one day about a fortnight after Nigel's arrival. Mrs. Ravenshaw was expecting friends to tea, and Clarence's temper had been already chafed by his mother's arranging that he, Nigel, and Hilda should keep away from the tennis-lawn which was just below the drawing-room window, and have their tea upstairs with the younger children. The alternative of dressing in his best clothes and listening to the old ladies' conversation did not commend itself to Clarence, but he chose to consider himself ill-used, and retreated to the schoolroom in one of his worst moods. Hilda was helping her brother to arrange flowers in the drawing-room, and Nigel, who was playing with his snake, took no notice of his cousin's complaints. The door opened, and Mrs. Ravenshaw came in hurriedly.

'Clarry, dear, will you pick Hilda a few more roses? Those people will be here in a minute, and I must rush upstairs and change my dress.'

'Oh! Mother, I'm just in the middle of reading,' said Clarence, irritably, drawing an open book towards him. 'Why can't Davis get them? What's the good of having a gardener ——'

'I'll get them for you, Aunt Edith,' said Nigel, putting Rajah back into his box and hastily closing the lid.

'Thank you, dear boy. I know you are always ready to help your poor old aunt,' said Mrs. Ravenshaw, with a grave glance at her son.

Clarence felt the reproach of his mother's words, and his conscience pricked him for his rude speech. The only effect it had at first, however, was in a renewed burst of ill-temper, to which he gave full vent the instant Mrs. Ravenshaw and Nigel had gone.

'Stuck-up prig!' he exclaimed, savagely. 'I like the way he sucks up to every one—he's always favoured—he and his beastly snake!'

He brushed roughly against the glass case as he passed it, and pushed the cover half off. He stopped one moment with the intention of replacing it—then his temper got the better of him, and he flung angrily out of the room, leaving the door ajar behind him.

'Let the thing get out! I don't care if it does. I only wish Father would find it and knock it on the head—it would be a jolly good riddance!'

Nigel and Hilda went straight upstairs without revisiting the schoolroom, and no one thought of the snake till about an hour later, when tea was over, and the three elder children were on their way downstairs to the garden again.

'The visitors will be going soon—we shall have time for a set before dark,' Hilda was saying.

'Listen! What's that?' interrupted Nigel, coming to a sudden standstill on the staircase.

The sound came from the drawing-room—an exclamation—then an unmistakable scream.

'They're not laughing—they sound frightened! What on earth is happening?'

A still louder scream — another — several voices together—then a crash of china. Now Mr. Ravenshaw's voice was heard above the clamour.

'Don't be alarmed! I beg you to sit still! The snake is perfectly harmless.'

'Great Scott!' cried Nigel. 'It's Rajah!'

Clarence gave a guilty start, and caught hold of the banisters.

'Don't go—there'll be an awful row.'

But Nigel had plunged down the remaining stairs and into the drawing-room.

A scene of wild confusion met his eyes. The cake-stand had been overturned and the carpet was strewn with sandwiches, bread and butter, and broken cakes. One old lady lay back in an arm-chair, half-fainting, while Mrs. Ravenshaw, looking pale and flurried, held smelling salts to her nose and tried to soothe her. Another guest was standing on the seat of her chair, clasping her skirts tightly round her ankles and screaming loudly, while a third clung frantically to the coat-tails of Mr. Ravenshaw, who was raking under the sofa with a tea-spoon. The two remaining visitors, who were slightly calmer, had retreated to the farthest corner of the room and seemed to be trying to summon up their courage to pass the sofa and gain the door.

'I can get him out if they'll all go,' said Nigel. 'He's frightened.'

Mr. Ravenshaw straightened his back and glared at his nephew. Then he and Aunt Edith conducted the trembling old ladies into the dining-room. Glasses of wine or sal-volatile were sent for, carriages were ordered round, gloves and parasols were collected, and before very long the last guest had driven home.

Clarence had slipped away in the confusion and had not reappeared, but Hilda and Nigel waited in the schoolroom for a long and very uncomfortable half-hour before Mr. Ravenshaw's tread was heard in the passage. His long grim face looked grimmer than ever as he fixed Nigel with what his own family used to call 'a cold grey eye.'

'You remember my condition about that snake?'

Nigel stood up and faced his uncle.

'Yes, sir,' was all he could find voice to say.

'I said you could keep it as long as it was not a nuisance to other people. This afternoon it was discovered coiled up in one of the drawing-room chairs, and the consequence was that half-a-dozen harmless old ladies were frightened nearly into fits—not to mention the smashing of your aunt's china and the mess on the carpet. If that isn't being a nuisance I don't know what is. You'll have to get rid of the brute at once.'

Nigel's face was absolutely white.

'I—I don't know any one who would take him for me, or any one I could give him to.'

'I don't suppose you do. It will have to be painlessly destroyed.'

'Uncle Joshua—you don't mean that—you wouldn't do that!' The boy's voice was a sharp cry of pain. 'I must have left the lid off, and he couldn't help it. It was my fault—you won't kill him for it—you wouldn't be so unjust!'

'It was certainly your fault,' said Uncle Joshua coldly. 'But that's an argument that won't do you much good. I get rid of the snake as a punishment for your disobedience. Of course,' he added with a sarcastic smile, 'I might keep the snake alive and give you a thrashing if you prefer it, but I am afraid I can't suggest any other alternative.'

Nigel's face relaxed into a look of relief.

'Oh, thank you, sir!' he said.

Mr. Ravenshaw raised his eyebrows and looked him over in considerable surprise. He was not at all prepared to be thus promptly taken at his word.

'Better not decide in a hurry,' he remarked gruffly. 'I don't do things by halves. If you stick to your choice you needn't expect to be let off cheaply.'

'I do stick to it, please,' repeated Nigel.

His strained, distressed expression had given place to what was almost a grateful smile.

'Very well. Take the snake up to your bedroom—you must keep it there for the future. Then go into the library and wait for me.' The door closed behind Nigel, and Hilda turned to her father with a frightened face.

'Father, you didn't mean what you said? Poor Nigel ——'

'You needn't worry yourself over Nigel,' said Mr. Ravenshaw coldly. 'I like to see a boy with some spirit in him. I wish Clarence had a little more.'

He left the room as he spoke, and Hilda, seeing that it was useless to argue or plead, threw herself into the rocking-chair and burst into tears. It was nearly a quarter of an hour before she was roused by her brother, who climbed in cautiously at the low window.

'Hullo! where's Nigel? Was Father in an awful rage? Has he settled old Rajah's bark?'

'Oh, Clarry!' sobbed Hilda, 'the most dreadful thing has happened!' She poured out the whole story, ending with: 'Poor Nigel is so fond of that snake he'd bear anything to save it—and we've been so horrid and unkind about it ever since he came.'

'You've not done anything,' said Clarence gruffly. 'But I let the wretched brute out. I knocked the lid off, and never put it on again.'

'Oh, *Clarence!*' was all Hilda could say, in a fresh burst of tears.

'I wish I'd known in time,' said Clarence uncomfortably, 'I'd have got him off. But it's no good saying anything now.'

A footstep on the gravel outside turned their eyes towards the window, and they saw Nigel walking slowly in the direction of the pond. He turned round and smiled when Hilda called his name.

'Where — where are you going?' she asked tremulously.

'To get frogs for Rajah.'

Clarence watched his cousin's retreating figure for a few moments, then said, 'I'm going to tell Father,' and abruptly left the room. It needed a great effort to face Mr. Ravenshaw in his den, but Clarence made it, and told his story truthfully, though he dared not meet his father's eye.

'Well, you have more pluck than I gave you credit for,' growled Mr. Ravenshaw at length. 'Clear out of here now—I can't be bothered any more. And—look here, Clarence—I hope you'll make friends with Nigel.'

'I—I want to,' said Clarence quite humbly.

A few minutes later he had joined his cousin at the pond.

'I've come to help you get frogs. I'm jolly glad Rajah wasn't killed.'

Nigel looked gratified. 'I thought you'd like him,' he said in a pleased tone, 'when you got to know him better.'

D. M. Percy Smith.

"A scene of wild confusion met his eyes."

"Bidding farewell to his friends in the best manner he could."

THE MUSCOVY MERCHANTS.

England's First Friendship with Russia.

II.—THE FROZEN SEA.

RICHARD THORNE wrote his letters to Henry VIII. and his ambassador in 1527; and there, so far as he was concerned, his plan to seek a North-East passage to the warm islands of spice came to an end. But whether it was the hope he put into the minds of men in England, or whether simply the news of travel and discovery in all parts of the world fired the thoughts of the English merchants, the men of London and the seamen of the West began slowly to plan their share in the wonders of the time. Just as now men 'venture' to win oil or indiarubber in far quarters of the globe, or to build a railway across a desert, or dam a river to make a waste country fertile, or go to the Pole in order to enlarge human wisdom, so, for gain or from curiosity, or from mere love of adventure, the Tudor merchants looked out on the wonders of a world in which there seemed to be no limit to discovery, and sent their captains and their fleets to its farthest shores.

To this end they collected news, and sought for charts and knowledge, and bought ships. They took counsel with one another, and with seamen and travellers; and they listened to no man more gladly than to Sebastian Cabot, who himself had been the first to find the mainland of North America. Now, Cabot, standing high in the favour of King Henry, and afterwards of his son Edward, had not only knowledge but vision in regard to the distant seas; and he had long had in mind that hope of Richard Thorne's, that there might be a way to the warm islands of spice through the frozen North-East, where as yet no man had voyaged. The merchants, moreover, grew more and more eager to hear him. They found that their wares, formerly in great request, were no longer sought after so eagerly by neighbouring countries, to whom the wealth of the new lands was beginning to flow; neither could the English come at those new lands for themselves, since Spain and Portugal were lords of the ways thither. Therefore, when the need for wider trade pressed upon them, and they heard what Cabot had in his mind, they were the more ready to join together in a common risk.

After much speech and conference, they concluded that three ships should be prepared 'for the search and discovery of the Northern part of the world, to open a way and passage for our men for travel to new and unknown kingdoms.' Six thousand pounds they gathered together, in shares of twenty-five pounds apiece; for they formed what to-day would be called a company, and a few years later, this 'fellowship and commonalty of merchant adventurers' received a royal charter, giving them privileges and rules for trade. At the head, until the charter set all such matters in order, were the most 'grave and wise' of the venturers; and among them Sebastian Cabot was chief or governor. High among those who ventured were such famous citizens of London as Sir John Gresham, Sir Andrew Judde, and Sir Thomas White: these three men did great service to education and learning in their day, and while they won prosperity for England at sea, built up wise knowledge also at home.

It would take too long to say how well and thoroughly the project was prepared; how the timber for the ships was specially seasoned and calked, how the keels were at great expense sheeted in lead, against the worms that can bore through the strongest oak there is: how vainly advice was sought from two uncouth, drunken Tartars who by some chance were then found in London; how full provision was made for a voyage of eighteen months in 'that huge and cold part of the world.' Neither can the rules for the voyage, laid down by Cabot himself, be set forth in full. They ordained clearly that men on such an expedition should be 'knit in unity, love, conformity, and obedience in every degree,' 'prompt and ready': all observations of stars, lands, tides, and navigation should be set down in writing, and the council of ships' masters should every week meet and confer on these matters; prayers and the Bible should be read every morning and evening, and all swearing and blasphemy punished; the sick were to be helped, the common stock properly used and shared, strange nations and races to be treated 'with all gentleness and courtesy.'

It was a hard thing to choose the leader for a voyage so full of hope and promise. The choice fell upon Sir Hugh Willoughby, 'a most valiant gentleman,' 'both by reason of his goodly personage (for he was of a tall stature), as also for his singular skill in the services of war. But it was on no errand of war or conquest that they sailed, for Sir Hugh bore with him letters in many languages, written by King Edward VI. to all the kings and princes to whose kingdoms they might come in their voyage; and in these letters he promised peace and good usage to all, and begged that other kings would show themselves to the English travellers, 'as you would that we and our subjects should show ourselves towards your servants, if at any time they shall pass by our regions.'

For the second place in the expedition there were many men to be taken into account, and they had much ado to come to a decision. But Henry Sidney (father of Sir Philip), a close friend of King Edward, and a sharer in the venture, set before the company one Richard Chanceler, of his own household. Chanceler was known to many, and of high repute, and much faith was put in him, and he was chosen to be the Pilot-General under Willoughby.

On the tenth day of May, 1553, all was ready, and they set forth from Ratcliffe, and put in at Deptford. At two in the afternoon of the 11th they came to Greenwich, where the Court then lay. They made a brave show. The *Good Hope*, of one hundred and twenty tons, with a pinnace and a small boat, carried Willoughby, and Chanceler was in the *Edward Bonaventure*, of one hundred and sixty tons. The great ships were towed down with boats and oars, and the mariners, clad in sky-blue cloth, 'rowed amain, and made way with diligence.' As they came to Greenwich, where it lies across at the bend of the river, all the courtiers came running out, and the common people flocked together, standing very thick upon the shore. The Privy Council looked out from the palace windows, and some ran up to the tops of the towers. The ships fired salutes with all their guns, 'after the manner of war and of the sea,' so that the tops of the hills resounded, and the valleys and the water gave an echo; the seamen shouted also so lustily that the sky rang again with the noise. One man would be standing on the poop of his ship, and by his gestures, bidding farewell to his friends in the best manner he could. Another walked upon the hatches, another climbed the shrouds, others stood upon the mainyard or in the tops. Only King

Edward was not present at that triumphal sailing; he lay sick, and before the ships had left the coast of England, they had news of his death. He was not to learn what fortune, good and ill, was to come upon the little fleet that set forth so gallantly in the spring sun.

(*Continued on page* 114.)

INSECT LIFE.

COUNTLESS lives surround us all,
Little noticed, if at all.

At our feet and in the air,
All around us, everywhere.

Teeming life is also found
If we look beneath the ground.

Many an insect, as we know,
Lives its early life below.

Many a little creature stays
Underground for all its days.

Others fly so far and long,
None would think their wings so strong.

Tiny beetles reach a height
Far above us, out of sight.

As we gaze we wonder why
Little insects go so high.

Yet the swifts, so high in air,
Joy to find a dinner there.

All these lives have tales to tell,
If we only listen well.

If we only stay to read,
Here are wonder tales indeed.

E. M. HAINES.

DOLLY'S NECKLACE.

'MOTHER, dear,' said Chris, looking up as Mrs. Gale entered the room, 'would you like me to take Daisy out this morning? Are you busy?'

The tired face brightened. 'Thank you, dear boy. I'm very busy indeed.' She leant over his shoulder. 'How is the drawing getting along?'

Chris looked dissatisfied. 'I can't get it right, mother.'

His mother sighed. 'I wish I could afford some good lessons, dear. It is such an interest for you.'

Chris took his crutch and sprang up nimbly. 'Don't worry, mother. Some day I'll be a great artist and make a heap of money, and we'll drive in a motor, as we did when Father was alive. Oh, here's Daisy. Will you come out with me, duckie?'

The little girl gave a hop of delight. 'I must get my hat and dolly.'

A few minutes later they went down the road. At the corner shop they stopped. It contained artists' materials, and Chris could never pass without looking in. He feasted his eyes on the paint-boxes, pencils and crayons, and finally caught sight of a small half-hidden sketch.

'Bother!' he ejaculated, trying vainly to peer round the edge of the obscuring paper—a notice of a reward offered for some lost property—'I wish I could see it properly. I don't see why they hide the prettiest thing in the window just because Mrs. Horton, of 5 Wood Lane, has been careless enough to lose a bracelet.'

They turned away, and Daisy skipped along gaily till they came to the woods. Here they seated themselves by a small stream opposite a deserted old mill. Chris took out his sketch-book. Many a time he had tried to draw this scene, but had never been pleased with the result. He was making another effort when Daisy attracted his attention.

'Chris, my dolly feels the heat so very much, and I can't take her cape off. It's got in a knot.'

Chris put down his pencil good-naturedly. 'I'll undo it for you. There! she'll feel cooler'—he began, then stopped. 'Daisy!' he gasped, 'where did you get this?'

''Tis my dolly's necklace,' replied the little one. 'Isn't it pretty?'

'But,' exclaimed her brother, 'it's—it's a bracelet! The notice he had just read flashed into his mind. 'When did you find it?' he asked.

'Long time ago,' said Daisy vaguely. 'Days and days and days.'

He tried to explain. 'See, Daisy, dolly's necklace belongs to a lady who lost it. I think I know who she is. We must take it back.'

But Daisy pouted. ''Tis mine. Dolly wants to wear it.'

Chris continued persuasively. 'The lady is awfully sorry she lost it. Wouldn't you like to make her happy again? I'll buy you some beautiful blue and red beads instead, and we'll make another, ever so much longer.'

Daisy broke into smiles. The blue and red beads sounded attractive.

In a short time the two stood before a door on which were the words, 'A. Horton. Artist.'

Chris gasped. What luck! To go into the house of a real live artist!

A maid opened the door, and in reply to his inquiry told him that the lady was out, but that he could see Mr. Horton.

She took them into a room such as Chris had never seen before. There were casts and models all about, and on a large easel was the very mill he had struggled again and again to draw.

He went towards it breathlessly. 'Oh, how lovely!' he gasped.

A hand was laid on his shoulder. 'So you like it, my boy?'

'It's lovely!' repeated Chris, still gazing rapturously. 'The water looks as if it is moving, and—and you can almost see the trees waving. Mine,' he finished sadly, 'is all lines. It isn't alive like yours.'

'Let me see,' said the gentleman, taking the book out of the boy's hand. He turned page after page. 'Who is teaching you?' he inquired.

'No one,' said Chris. 'We can't afford it yet.'

'So you like drawing?'

'I love it!'—enthusiastically. 'You see,' he added, 'with having one leg shorter than the other I can't do things like most boys, so I draw all my spare time. Some day I'll be a great artist.'

But Daisy, who was longing to be out in the sunshine, pulled his hand.

'I want to go and get the beads, Chris,' she whispered.

"She took them into a room such as Chris had never seen before."

This reminded Chris for what they had come, and he held out the bracelet, flushing scarlet as he explained where he had found it. 'I don't know how long Daisy has had it. She is such a little girl. She didn't know it was wrong to keep it,' he finished.

'Tis my dolly's necklace,' said Daisy, smiling at Mr. Horton; 'but Chris says he'll buy me a prettier one, all red and blue beads.'

Mr. Horton patted the little girl's cheek. 'Mrs. Horton will be delighted to have it again. I am sure

there was a reward offered, but I forget what it was. Tell me your name and address and we will call.'

Chris looked uncomfortable. 'We live in Gray Road, but we don't want a reward. Mother wouldn't like us to take it.'

The two bid farewell and went home, buying the beads on the way, to Daisy's intense pleasure.

For the rest of the day Chris could talk of little but the artist and what he had seen in his room.

'It has given me a fresh idea about that mill, mother,' he said that evening, bringing out his drawing. But just then there was a knock at the door and Mr. and Mrs. Horton were announced.

The two ladies took to each other at once.

'I was so glad to have my bracelet again,' said Mrs. Horton, 'and my husband is so interested in your son.'

'I want you to let him come to me for lessons,' said the artist.

Mrs. Gale hesitated. 'I hoped some day to be able to afford——'

But Mr. Horton interrupted. 'Nonsense! Why wait? It would be a pleasure to me to teach him. What do you say, Chris?'

Chris' blazing eyes made their own answer.

'That's settled, then! I shall expect you on your next half-holiday.'

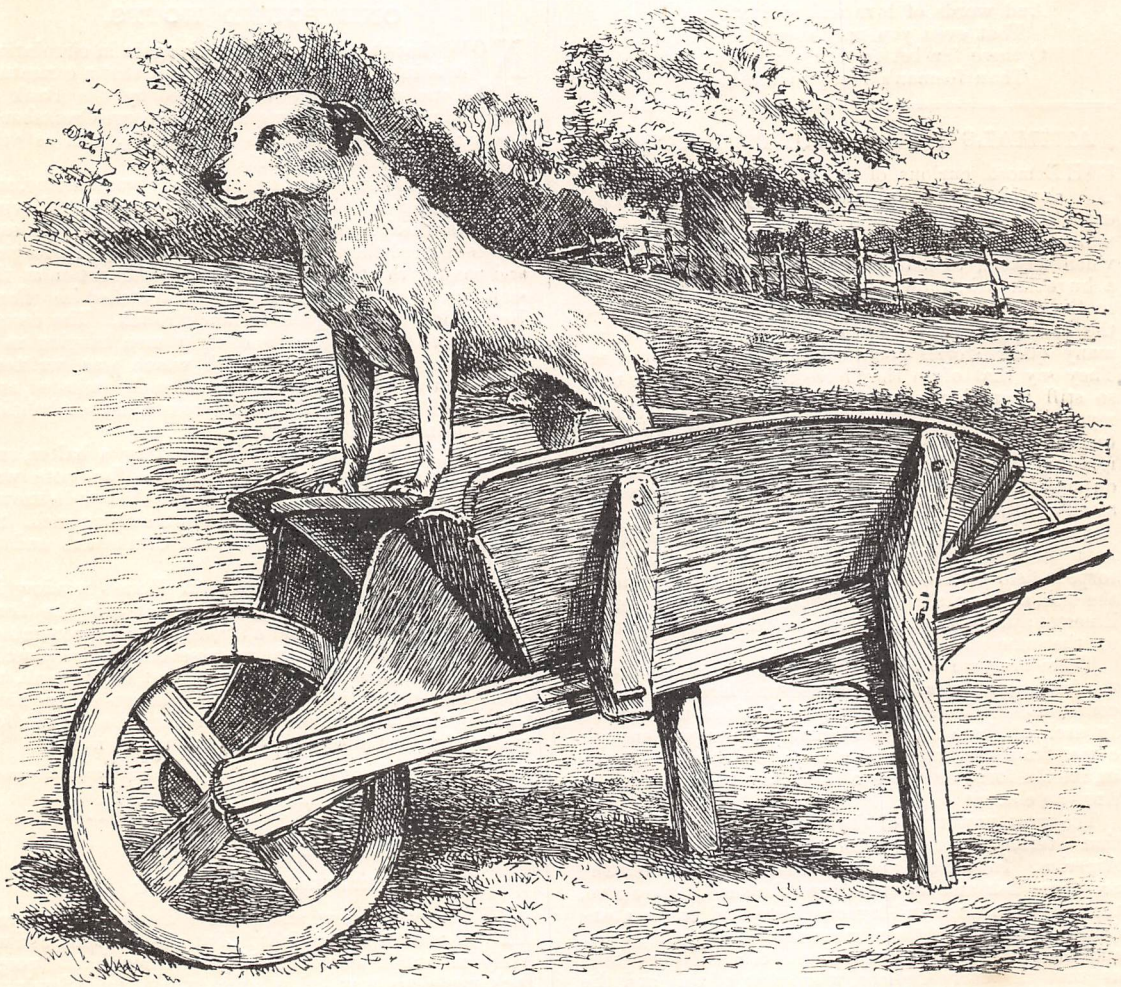
They went away after a little more friendly chat, leaving Chris overwhelmed with delight.

'Mother,' he said, as the door shut after them, 'it seems too good to be true. But it isn't quite fair, is it? Daisy found the bracelet and *I* get the reward.'

C. E. Thonger.

THE GARDENER'S DOG.

THE great war has brought to light many instances of animal devotion, one of which is illustrated here. A gardener had a fox-terrier which used to guard his wheelbarrow and tools while he was busy at work. The gardener heard the call of duty and



The Gardener's Dog.

joined the Army, and was sent on active service far away from England. But the dog still trots every day to the disused wheelbarrow, and will let no one come near it. He does not know that his master has given his life for his country.

THE NOBLEST KNIGHTHOOD.

WHEN valiant knights in olden days
Went out upon their quest,
They wandered far through forest ways,
With sword and armour drest.

But though not clad in bright array,
Nor bearing lance or spear,
Each child may noble be as they,
Do brave things now, and here.

For ill and weakness overcome,
And wrong that sorrow breeds,
And sweetness, patience in the home,
Are truly knightly deeds.

And words of love and sympathy,
That even you may speak,
O these far better things will be
Than foeman's lance to break.

ANIMALS YOU SHOULDN'T TOUCH.

THE most curious of all animals are those one should not touch, unless a very great surprise is expected. There are very few of them in existence which have this peculiar power of giving one a shock when wishing to defend themselves. One of them is a huge flat fish, known as the 'Torpedo,' which belongs to the sun-fish species, and is found in the waters of the Mediterranean. Sailors and fishermen there tell many queer stories about this electrician of the sea. They say that often they have found their arms made so stiff that they cannot move them, because of the mysterious current of electricity sent up the line by the torpedo-fish below touching it. Until of late years the ignorant French, Italian, and Greek fishermen looked on such an experience as something not to be understood at all, and suffered it in fear and trembling.

Many centuries ago, however, physicians in Rome kept large fish-ponds or aquariums containing the torpedo-fish, and their patients were allowed to touch the fish, and get shocks as a means of curing certain illnesses; just as to-day doctors use the electric battery for the same end.

There are two other electric fish, each belonging to the fresh-water rivers and streams and lagoons of warm countries, which give as sharp a shock as the torpedo. In each of these fish the electricity, strangely enough, comes from certain interior parts, which are not at all unlike the form or shape of a voltaic battery, such as rings an electric bell.

The most powerful of these tropical electric fish is that termed the *Gymnotus electricus* of South America. In various parts of that continent, so many are these fish and so strong are the shocks they give, that river-crossings and lagoons have had to be abandoned on account of them harassing folks crossing over, and their horses and other animals, too. History tells us that the early Indians, who knew of this and the other electric fish, took advantage of their knowledge concerning them by using such infested waters for taming wild horses. The most unruly colt or horse, after having been driven into the waters of the electric fish, and 'shocked' by them, came out tamed and most manageable.

Again, there is the cat-fish, or *Melapterus*, of the River Nile, the whole body of which, save its head and fins, is covered with minute electric cells, giving a shock that makes your arm tingle.

Just as there are such fish, so there are electric insects. One of the best known is the so-called 'Wheel-bug,' or *Reduvius serratus*, of the West Indies. It gives a shock as if from an electric wire, the organs or parts from which the current comes being in the creature's legs.

But, perhaps queerest of all such living things, is the 'Balloon-fish,' or *Tetradon*, of the Comoro Islands. When captured, it gives forth strong electric shocks, causing one to drop it, when it instantly becomes the shape of a balloon—whence its name.

ONE POUND NOTES.

NOW that the one pound note is again in circulation, it is interesting to recall the fact that a caricature of the one pound note then issued by the Bank of England was drawn and engraved by George Cruikshank, the famous artist, and was regarded by him as 'the great event of his artistic life.'

In those days the penalty for forgery was hanging, and Cruikshank relates how one day in the year 1818 having business which took him past Newgate prison he saw people hanged there who had been convicted for forging and passing these notes. Fired with indignation at the sight, on his return home he drew and etched his 'Bank Restriction Note,' signed by Jack Ketch. The design represented three women and eight men hanging in a line from a gibbet, underneath which was written: 'During the Issue of Bank Notes easily imitated, and until the Resumption of Cash Payments, or the Abolition of the Punishment of Death.'

The sign of the £ was represented by a halter, and down the side was a line of fetters. The note was printed and published by Hone, the well-known publisher and antiquary, and sold at a shilling each. So great was the demand for them that Cruikshank had to sit up all night to etch another plate.

When the note was on view in Hone's window in Ludgate Hill the crowd became so great that the Lord Mayor was obliged to send a strong posse of constables to clear them away. Hone made seven hundred pounds clear profit over the transaction, and Cruikshank, to quote his own words, 'had the satisfaction of knowing that no man nor woman was ever hanged after this for passing forged Bank of England one pound notes.'

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 82.)

HERE was a new and terrible danger. The huge mass of timber might fall at any moment, and as likely as not it would crash right through the poop. Dick made his way below quickly, aud told Sandy to follow him out of the cabin.

'Come on up, old man!' he called cheerfully. 'Don't worry any more about the clothes. There's a fire in the galley, where we can get ours dry.'

Sandy came up at once, and was rather unexpectedly unconcerned when he learnt that the ship was deserted.

'Anyway, we can't get into a row if there's no one on board to do it,' he remarked, in rather a relieved tone than otherwise. 'It's that I was afraid of more than anything. Let's look round for some grub.'

'I expect there's lots in the galley,' Dick answered, cheered almost in spite of himself by the younger boy's composure.

The two departed aft, and discovered some hard biscuit in a locker and also a tin of jam.

'Here's some condensed milk, too,' Sandy announced as he rummaged. 'And—oh, I say, Dick, we can have some hot tea—*hot!* How ripping!'

Food and warm drink put a new heart into Dick, and he was almost prepared to agree with Sandy that the whole affair was no more than an exciting and wonderful adventure, which must come out all right in the end.

'It's just like fellows in books,' the younger boy said, his mouth nearly full of biscuit and jam. 'Think what awful fun it'll be searching for things on board, like the Swiss Family. And I b'lieve if we stick to her and get her safe to port, we shall earn a lot of money—salvage, or whatever they call it. Perhaps we shall get enough, without bothering about the old treasure.'

Dick, unwilling to depress the other, did not inquire how they were to convey the *Sea Rover* safe to port, even if she floated long enough for them to make the attempt. He often felt much older than Sandy than the two years which really separated them, and in this case the elder boy was unselfishly glad that his brother did not quite realise the horrors of their position.

'It's certainly jolly exciting,' he agreed. 'But we'd better get out of these wet things now. Mine are sticking to me, and it's not comfortable.'

Having undressed, and hung their damp garments round the galley fire, they wrapped themselves in blankets and set out on an expedition of discovery, thus attired. They had decided to stay in the galley, since the tottering mizzen-mast made the after-cabin a perilous spot; but they ventured to explore the pantry, where, to their delight, they found an ample supply of food for their present needs.

Water was likely to be a difficulty, for they had no idea of where the vessel's tanks were placed, but a breaker in the galley that was half full would last them for some time.

In the carpenter's berth, to Sandy's romantic satisfaction, they found all manner of tools, as well as nails and screws. Evidently the best had been taken, but plenty remained, far more, indeed, than they were likely to require.

The chart that was pinned on the cabin table showed the barque's position at noon two days before. Their course was marked by a series of short, straight lines, each ending in a round dot, against which the date was entered. Evidently they were well to the south of the Bay of Biscay, but a good deal to the westward of Spain, as far as they could make out.

Out on deck again, the two boys scanned the horizon for passing ships until their eyes ached, but no sign of smoke or sail rewarded them for their pains. They found a loose rope which ran through a block under the mizzen-top. To this they fastened an old ensign which was in a locker. It was well known, even to Dick and Sandy, through their seafaring reading, that a flag set upside down is a signal of distress all the world over. They inverted it and hoisted it up as high as the line would take it. Should any distant vessel chance to see them, that scrap of bunting would make known the fact that those on board the derelict were in dire need of help.

It was towards sunset by the time this task was completed, and there seemed nothing else to be done for the moment. The boys returned to the galley and picnicked in front of the fire. Then they turned in on the top of a luxurious heap of bedding commandeered from the forecastle.

Even Dick did not lie awake long, troubled by fears for the future. Soon both slept as soundly as in their beds at home.

CHAPTER VI.

'LAND! land! land!'

The repeated yell awakened Dick at last; he rolled over on his side, then tumbled to his feet, disengaging himself from the blankets which hampered his movements.

He stumbled to the door of the galley, and recognised that Sandy was the origin of the wild shouts. The younger boy was leaning against the bulwark, still wrapped in a blanket, like an Indian brave. At the sound of his brother's approach, he yelled the louder, pointing to something away on their port bow.

'It's land, Dick! It really is land, I tell you!' he cried.

Dick reached his side, and together the two boys stared away under their hands. Land it was undoubtedly, but still very far away indeed, just a faint cloud on the horizon, although now and again a gleam from the rising shone unmistakably on low cliffs.

It was a clear, brilliant morning, and only a slight swell remained to remind them of what the storm had been. True, the barque still rolled most uncomfortably, but they had grown accustomed to the motion by now, and she seemed no lower in the water. If the *Sea Rover* was fated to sink, she was evidently in no hurry about it.

When Sandy had first sighted the coast it lay upon their port bow, but soon it showed almost broad abeam, for the barque drifted at a fair speed.

'We don't seem to get much nearer, though——' Dick cogitated.

'Well, we can't steer the old boat, anyway!' Sandy said. 'There isn't any wheel to steer with. It's all washed away.'

'And I do believe the shore's farther away than it was,' Dick said anxiously, peering under his curved palms. 'I'm pretty sure we're beginning to drift in the wrong direction. . . . Sandy, we must try and do something with that smashed boat. If the worst comes to the worst, we'd better row ashore—if we can.'

'Of course we can!' Sandy retorted valiantly. 'Don't you remember at Margate last year . . . . that old sailor said I rowed splendidly for my age, and you were quite as good.'

But Dick did not feel so confident; he rather wished he did.

(*Continued on page* 98.)

"'It's land, Dick; it really is land.'"

"A great tongue of flame shot up to a huge height."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 95.)

THE boat that lay stove in on the deck-house roof was the smallest which the barque had carried. She was one of those flat, long-nosed craft that are called prams. They are generally to be seen on the decks of Norwegian or Swedish vessels, and are often carried by English ships as well, for they are light and easily handled.

It was encouraging to find that the hole in her planks was not nearly as serious as it had appeared at first sight, and Dick, who had always had a taste for carpentering and more than a little skill, had no doubt of his ability to make her fairly water-tight.

He had found a roll of new canvas amongst the barque's stores, and in the carpenter's berth were all the nails and tools that he could want. Best of all was a can of thick, coarse tar, which was stowed forward, with some paints and other lumber.

Sandy was highly excited, and felt himself a second Robinson Crusoe as he helped his brother with a good will, but no particular command of method There was no lack of material, so they nailed layer after layer of canvas over the hole, covering each one thickly with a coat of tar. It was not by any means a pretty job when completed, but the result bade fair to make the damaged boat water-tight once more, and, as Sandy wisely remarked: 'There's nobody to *see* it.'

But to shift her from her present position was another matter altogether, and it was really more by luck than skill that Sandy hit upon a method.

'Look here, why shouldn't we tie her to one of these ropes?' he said, pointing to the falls which hung from the empty quarter-boat davits. 'If we fixed it on the other side of her, and then pulled, I believe we could haul her over.'

They proceeded to carry out the plan, and it was eminently successful. Each of the falls consisted of a powerful purchase, and the combined strength of the two boys was quite enough to shift the boat. Over she came gaily, poised for a moment on one side, and then, with a crash, down she fell, right way up, it is true, but balanced so insecurely that, with her keel on the extreme edge of the house, she threatened every moment to roll over on to the deck below.

Dick had just time to climb up and secure her before the *Sea Rover* rolled again, and it was really the best thing that could have happened. Having hooked on the two falls at either side of the boat, the boys were able to shove her off with but little effort. As she swung out, she just grazed the bulwark and hung clear over the side of the barque from the davits.

There they left her ready in case of need, having first put aboard the oars and some biscuits and water, as well as a couple of blankets and a tin can for baling, if necessary. However, Dick had no intention of trusting themselves to her until all chance was past of the barque drifting ashore herself, and it was he who thought of an alternative plan, as he eyed doubtfully the boat, heavy and unwieldy enough for the management of two boys.

'It'll be a tough job pulling ashore in that,' he said.

'Oh, we shall manage all right!' retorted Sandy, airily. 'Anyway, it's the only thing to do if we don't drift closer.'

'I don't know so much about that,' said Dick, slowly. 'I'm thinking... why shouldn't we signal to the shore for help? Why shouldn't they send off a boat to fetch us?'

'How can we signal?' Sandy asked, sceptically. 'We've no gun or anything; and a lot of use our flag's been!'

'Of course, a tiny thing like that is no good ... Be quiet a minute, Sandy—I'm still thinking... I've thought!'

Sandy stared in amazement at the flushed, excited face of his usually quiet brother.

'What have you thought of?' he inquired, ungrammatically.

'A bonfire—we'll make a bonfire! A great huge one, that they can't help seeing. Then they'll be pretty sure to send off to find out what it is. It's well worth trying, anyway.'

Sandy thoroughly agreed. The prospect of such an exciting and delightful adventure as a bonfire of unlimited size was almost too good to be true, in the younger boy's opinion. But, steadied by Dick's commonsense, they went about their preparations methodically and carefully.

On one side of the barque, the sea had made a clean breach through the bulwarks. Opposite to this open space they laid four broken spars on deck and lashed them together to form a kind of square frame. Over it they stretched the tarpaulin which had been used to cover the hole in the deck.

They slid this light, rough raft overboard easily enough, and, towing it alongside, they piled it with loose straw and with everything inflammable that they could lay their hands on.

'When the tarpaulin's all wet, it won't catch on fire,' Dick said. 'I expect we shall be able to keep it afloat and burning for ages.'

'Let's light it at once!' Sandy was almost jumping up and down on the deck with excitement, for what boy, of whatever age, can resist the prospect of a good blaze?

'No, we'd better wait till it's dark,' Dick decided, prudently. 'It won't show nearly so well in daylight, and we don't want to waste it all, when it's so awfully important that we should be seen. Let's get up a tremendous lot of straw from the hold to feed it with after it's well alight.'

The heavy bales of compressed straw were quite unmanageable in themselves, but the boys cut the wires that bound them, and tore them to pieces. They then passed the material up through the great rent in the deck that had been made when the mainmast fell. Soon they had collected a huge pile of loose straw, and sat down to wait impatiently for night to fall.

The sun set early, for they were far south by now, and its setting was quickly followed by darkness. There is but little twilight in semi-tropical latitudes. The raft was secured by a line at either end; the boys hauled it close alongside, lit the loose straw in three or four places, and then pushed it off to the full extent of the ropes that held her.

For a few moments there was nothing to be seen or heard but a smouldering and crackling, with here and there tiny flames creeping like live creatures in the straw.

'Looks as if there were worms all on fire, wriggling about,' commented Sandy. 'But I wish it would blaze properly—oh!'

All of a sudden a great tongue of flame shot up to a huge height, and another, and another . . . the straw was dry and loosely piled; once started, it blazed like tinder. It was not long before they had to haul the raft alongside in order to feed the flames. This time they added a lot of splintered wood, which they had collected and which seemed likely to burn longer.

It was a curious scene, for the whole barque was lit up by the glare from the raft, and the air was full of the roaring sound of the flames, and the fierce crackling of the wood. The boys' faces were flushed with the heat and blackened with smoke, and Sandy laughed outright with excitement as he flung down armful after armful into the furnace alongside.

(*Continued on page* 106.)

SING HEY! SING HO!

SING HEY! sing ho! when daisies blow
All in the spring-time weather,
And daisy chains in fields and lanes
The children weave together.
Sing hey! sing ho! for out of doors
To laugh and play on daisied floors.

Sing hey! sing ho! when roses blow
And foxglove bells are ringing,
When children meet in hayfields sweet,
Where baby birds are winging.
Sing hey! Sing ho! for out of doors
To laugh and play on meadow floors.

Sing hey! sing ho! when children go
Where hazel nuts are ready,
When Jack and Jill their buckets fill
With fingers quick and steady.
Sing hey! Sing ho! for out of doors
To laugh and play on woodland floors.

Sing hey! sing ho! when falls the snow
All in the winter weather,
And on the ice, so thick and nice,
The children slide together.
Sing hey! sing ho! for out of doors
To laugh and play on streamlet floors.

EILEEN CARFRAE.

A JOURNEY TO GO.

I.—THE CHOICE OF A ROAD.

A JOURNEY to go! What joy and thrilling excitement there is in that short sentence! What boundless possibilities of novelty, interest, and adventure! At one time a journey was a perilous and difficult enterprise, not to be undertaken without long consideration and preparation; but now modern inventions and discoveries have made travel so easy and luxurious that a voyage from London to Calcutta or Sydney is a more simple and pleasant experience than a trip to Paris would have been two hundred years ago.

In ancient times travel for pleasnre was quite unknown, and people only moved away from their homes when they were driven to do so by dire necessity, such as want of food, or in order to escape from some powerful and ruthless enemy. There were no railways or good roads in those strange, primitive days, and travellers had to go from place to place either by water or else by rough tracks that led them over mountains and through dark, gloomy forests.

Nowadays everything is altered, and it is only a day's journey from one end of England to the other. But our express trains and motor-cars carry us along so swiftly that we hardly have time to realise what the scenery is like, or to notice the towns and villages through which we pass. Let us, then, try to imagine that we are travelling in a more leisurely fashion, and are able to see the country as it is now, and to picture what it was like in the romantic and exciting days of old.

'All roads lead to Rome'—that saying every one knows, and in England it would be as true to say that 'All roads lead from London.' If we look at a modern railway map we see that the metropolis is like nothing so much as the centre of a gigantic spider's web. Before the days of railways, the great coaching roads had the same starting-point, and, longer ago still, the wonderful straight highways that were made by our Roman conquerors branched out in all directions from the little walled city on the Thames that they called Londinium.

To-day, in Cannon Street, sunk into the wall of St. Swithin's Church, and protected by an iron grating, there is an ancient, weather-beaten stone. It is one of the most interesting relics of antiquity in the whole of England. This is the London Stone, mentioned again and again in history, which, as Shakespeare tells us, Jack Cade struck with his staff when he entered London at the head of his Kentish rebels, and cried, 'Now is Mortimer lord of the City.'

It is believed that this stone was first set up on the Watling Street, which was the name given to the great Roman road running from Dover to the north, and that from it distances were reckoned.

It was at that time the very centre of London, and, indeed, of England itself, for six, if not eight, important roads met at the spot. We surely cannot do better than follow the example of our ancestors of two thousand years ago, and make it our starting-point when we set out on our travels through the length and breadth of the country.

North, south, east, and west, there are four points of the compass, but really we only have the choice of three routes, for London is near the mouth of the Thames, and, if we start from the metropolis, and make our way along the course of the river, we shall find that, before long, our road must needs take a northerly or a southerly direction.

North, south, or west, then, which shall it be? The choice is not an easy one, for each route has its own interests, its own history, and its own characteristics.

In the north of England, for instance, are situated the great coal-fields and mining districts, and there, in consequence, the principal manufacturing towns have sprung up. Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, and the five black towns of Staffordshire, all these are in the north or north-midland counties, and a journey in that direction will give us a good idea of the commercial and mineral wealth of our native land. The Road of Progress, that is what the route to the north of England may be called, and if we travel along it, we shall see how the face of the country has been changed by the hands of men, how forests have been cut down, mines bored, and great canals constructed, which enable ocean-going steamers to carry their cargoes to the quays of inland cities.

A Track in the Stone-age.

A Roman Military Road

From the north to the south, and, as far as England is concerned, this latter route and that to the south-east, has always been the Way of War, for, all through the centuries, ever since the days when they followed the red cross banners, or went to fight at Crecy and Agincourt, our soldiers have marched to the Channel coast in order to meet their enemies. The road from London to Dover has seen many strange sights and many pageants of victory during the twenty centuries of English history, and it is by the same routes to-day that the khaki-clad men of our new armies set out for France, when they go to fight shoulder to shoulder with their old foes against a new enemy.

The west—that is the third direction left open to us, and perhaps it will be the best one to choose for our first journey, for 'Westward Ho!' is the watchword of adventurers, and has been so ever since the days when Cabot and Columbus set out across the Western Ocean on their wonderful and seemingly foolhardy voyages in search of a new world. Later on, the West Indies, as they were called, came to be considered a perfect fairy-land of wealth and wonder, and it was in a westerly direction that Sir Francis Drake sailed round the world. Even Australia, one of the most easterly of all our possessions, was first reached by way of Cape Horn and not by the easier route round the Cape of Good Hope.

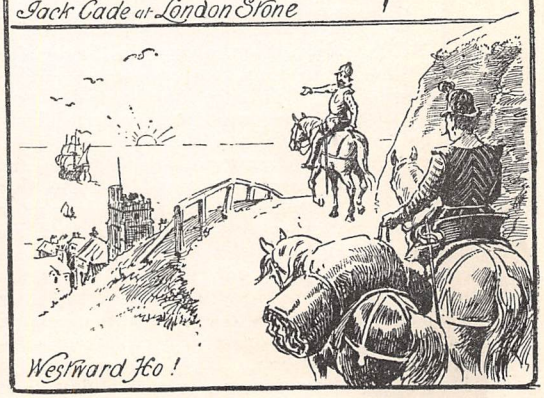
To the west, then: it has always been the direction of adventure, romance, and mystery.

In England, as was natural from its geographical position, invading armies have come from the east, and as the Britons fled from the conquering Romans and Saxons, so, in their turn, the Saxons took refuge from the pagan Danes in the wild hills and valleys of the west country. Even now, as we travel westward through Wiltshire and Somerset, we see, in place-names, battlefields, and ancient entrenched camps, unmistakable traces of those old-time fugitives. Britons, Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans—they have all left their marks, and the history of those warlike, stormy days is cut deep into the hills and valleys of the country-side.

We see, too, as we travel westward, the highways of different periods and can note the changes that have taken place. To begin with, there is the broad line of the Great Western Railway, with its stations, telegraph wires, and swift express trains, that can make the journey of one hundred and twenty miles between London and Bristol in as many minutes. Not far away is the Bath road, for many centuries one of the most important thoroughfares in England, and further south is an older highway still, the Roman road to the west, traces of which can be seen at Staines, where it crossed the Thames, and in Windsor Forest.

The Romans, it is said, learned the science of road-making from the Carthaginians, and when they had conquered a new country, one of their first works was always the making of great military roads by means of which their legions might be moved rapidly from place to place and the defeated tribes thus kept in subjection. The Romans, it is clear, were skilful engineers, although their methods and tools were of the most simple description. A row of soldiers, we are told, was first placed in

Jack Cade at London Stone



Westward Ho!

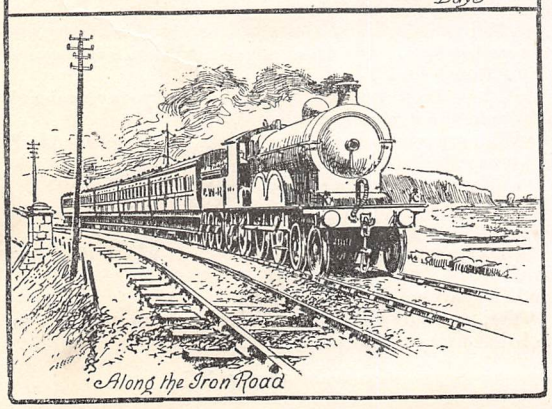
position, the men standing at intervals of a few yards, and a straight furrow was made with a plough from one to the other. The work of road-making was then done by the soldiers themselves, with pick and shovel, the centurions acting as overseers. A Roman road, as a rule, ran straight as a die across country in the desired direction, obstacles being ignored, and hills and valleys taken, as it were, in its stride. When marshy lands were reached, the road was raised on an embankment, and rivers were crossed by bridges or paved fords.

These wonderful roads were made with stones and cement on a solid foundation, and after the Romans had left England, many of them were wilfully destroyed for the sake of the materials of which they had been constructed.

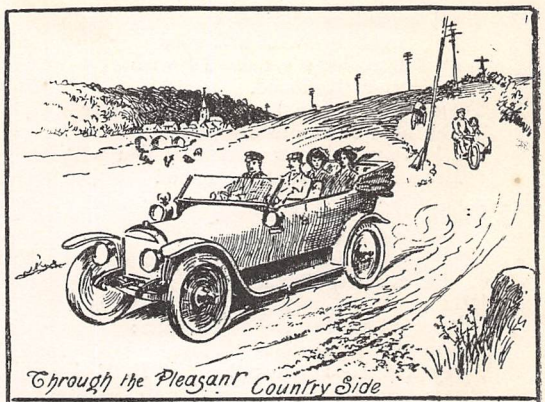
Even before the Roman Conquest there were roads in Britain, and high up on the Wiltshire Downs one of these can still be seen. It is called the Ridgeway, and is a wide grass-grown track with a bank on each side. On these same hills, too, there are examples of still earlier paths, the little tracks that wind through woods or zig-zag up and down the slopes; for these roads, or others like them, were made by the bare feet of the men and women of the Stone Age, as they went to and from their strange rock dwellings. In primitive times people seem always to have travelled by the easiest and not by the most direct route, and to-day, in wild districts and tropical forests, the natives use narrow tracks that wind hither and thither in order to avoid swamps, rocks, and other obstacles.

Modern engineers, instead of following the straight,

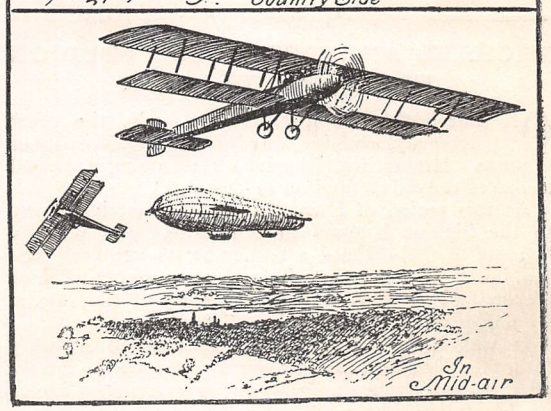
In the Good Old Coaching Days



Along the Iron Road



Through the Pleasant Country Side



In Mid-air

ruthless lines of the Romans, have gone back in some ways to more simple and natural principles, and in our roads of to-day we see wonderful curves, slopes, and zig-zags by means of which the ascent of steep hills becomes easy.

As we journey westward either by rail or along the Bath road, we catch glimpses of another thoroughfare, which is the oldest and was once the most important of all. This is the river Thames, for in ancient times, when the country was covered with thick forest, travel by water was the quickest and safest means of getting from place to place or of escaping from enemies. As we see the Thames to-day, with its smooth reaches, its bridges, and rows of gaily-decked house-boats, it is difficult to picture it as it must have been three thousand years ago and more, when there were dangerous rapids instead of weirs and locks, when wolves and bears roamed in the dark forests on either bank, and when the only boats were rough dug-out canoes or basket-work coracles paddled by painted and skin-clad savages.

THE HOP-GARDENS OF SUSSEX.

THE hop-gardens of Sussex
Are thronged with folk to-day:
The big folk are hard at work,
The little folk at play.
Down come the drooping clusters
That trail in long festoons,
All in the golden weather
Of September afternoons.

The hop-gardens of Sussex
They smell so sweet and good,
And if I might, it's there I'd wish
To earn a livelihood.
Though new-mown hay be good to smell,
The hops are quite divine;
Oh, you may choose what work you will,
But this work shall be mine!

The hop-gardens of Sussex
Are folded very deep
'Mid larchen woods and stately pines
That murmur in their sleep;
'Mid meadows green and stubbly fields
And lambs that twist and turn:
Oh, in the hop-gardens I'd love
My livelihood to earn! R. B. Ince.

MICHAEL ANGELO'S FIRST STEP ON THE PATH OF FAME.

On March 6th, 1474, Michael Angelo, the great painter and sculptor, was born in the old castle of Caprese. His father, Lionardo Buonarotti, belonged to one of the oldest families in Tuscany.

At this period of Florentine history, merchants rose to the highest honours in the State. The princely house of Medici claimed a collier as its founder. His son, being an apothecary, bore the name of Medici, or doctor, and on that account the arms of the Medici were five golden balls, or pills.

It was little wonder then that Michael Angelo's father fondly hoped that his son would raise the family fortunes, and become ambassador, or governor of one of the Florentine castles. The boy's foster-mother was a stone-cutter's wife, and while he grew strong and healthy under her care he learned to amuse himself for hours with a chisel and hammer. His first cries mingled with the harsh grating of the saw.

His father did his utmost to discourage the boy's artistic tastes. A painter called Ghirlandajo noticed his work, and remarked with truth, 'The child is a rising star, who will one day eclipse the brightest planet now shining.' This kind friend went to Lionardo Buonarotti, and begged him to let Michael Angelo study art with him.

At the mere idea of such a calling for the son he was so proud of, old Buonarotti started from his chair in a fury. A few moments' thought made him alter his mind. Then he went to his desk calmly, and wrote out an agreement binding Michael Angelo to serve a three-years' apprenticeship with Ghirlandajo. With a deep sigh the unhappy father signed this document, as he might have done a death-warrant.

Hardly waiting to thank his father, the boy ran downstairs, throwing up his cap in his joy. He knew he would not have to study grammar any more, so his first act was to burn his school books. Yet he was treated almost as a servant at his new master's. But that did not matter, he was free to follow his own tastes. He was happier than a Medici, daubing the walls, grinding colours, or moulding a piece of plaster. No one pulled his ears now, or called the work waste of time.

Before his thirteenth birthday he showed such genius that some of his fellow-students were jealous of him. A blow from one of his companions, called Torregiano, broke the cartilage of the young artist's nose, and disfigured it for life. But he won the love and admiration of some of the greatest painters of his day, and Benvenuto Cellini, whose gifts equalled his own, always spoke of him as the 'divine Buonarotti.'

During Michael Angelo's wanderings in the gardens of the Medici palace, he met some of the stone-cutters who had once rocked his cradle. They were always glad to see him, and sometimes brought him to look at the wonderful art treasures in the picture-gallery of the palace.

One day the workmen offered him a piece of marble, telling him he might use it as he pleased. He answered by grasping a chisel, throwing off his jacket, and beginning to hammer the outline of a faun's head. The studio was deserted to work at it. His master was angry, but did not force him to return there against his will.

When he was just putting the finishing touches to the old faun's head, a man about forty years of age, and very plainly dressed, passed through the garden. He paused to watch the young sculptor, who went on with his work as quietly as if no one were standing at his side. Suddenly he drew back to see the head from a greater distance. The silent observer had waited for this moment. He came up closer to the boy and laid his hand on his shoulder, saying, in a friendly voice, 'My young artist, may I make a criticism?'

'You make a criticism upon my faun's head,' said Michael Angelo, turning round sharply. 'May I ask what right you have to speak of my work?'

'That does not matter as long as my criticism is just.'

'Who will decide that, sir?'

'I know I may leave that point to your own judgment.'

'Well, tell me what you think about it, sir,' said Michael Angelo, crossing his arms defiantly.

'Don't you want to make an old faun laughing heartily, my boy?'

'It is easy to see that, sir.'

'Have you ever seen an old man who had not lost some teeth?'

The boy blushed to his very eyes, and bit his lips. The criticism was right. As soon as the stranger had turned his back, Michael Angelo caught up his chisel and knocked out two of the faun's teeth. Indeed, he even thought of hollowing out the gum next day.

The following morning the gardens were no sooner opened than Michael Angelo hurried there. But the faun had vanished, and the stranger stood waiting for him on the spot. He cried angrily, 'What has become of my faun's head?'

'It has been removed from here by my orders,' answered the stranger, carelessly.

'Who are you, sir, to give orders in the gardens of the great Medici?'

'Follow me into the palace, and you shall know.'

'Yes, I will go there with you, and force you to give me back my faun.'

'Perhaps you may prefer to leave it where it is, my boy.'

'We shall see about that, sir.'

'Yes, we shall see about that,' echoed the stranger, as he led the way to the palace.

(*Concluded on page* 107.)

THE PUNCTURE.

'I'M ready,' said Fred Dane, shutting his pump.

'Come on, Flo.'

'I'll just say good-bye to mother,' answered his sister.

'Don't be silly! You're not going for a week!' was the cross reply.

Heedless of this remark, Flo ran upstairs. 'We're off, Mother, dear.'

'Good-bye, dear,' said Mrs. Dane, who was kneeling before a large trunk. 'It's going to be a lovely afternoon. I hope this weather will continue for our holidays.'

'Have you nearly finished packing, Mother?'

'Very nearly. We must not leave anything to do in the morning, as we are making such an early start.'

Flo kissed her. As she ran away, Mrs. Dane called after her: 'Flo, dear, you are only cycling to the Farm, are you not? I don't want you to go to the Spencers' to-day. You won't forget?'

'No, Mother.'

In a few minutes she was racing down the road after Fred. To her annoyance she found that he had been joined by Will Edwards. She did not like Will. Fred nearly always got into trouble when they were together. However, it could not be helped, so she greeted him civilly.

It was a pleasant ride, and they were met at the farmyard by Mr. West. 'Hullo, young people!' he called. 'Here you are! Well, Master Fred and Miss Flo, I have got the puppy I promised you.'

They dismounted in great excitement and followed to the stable.

'What little beauties!' exclaimed Fred, as they caught sight of four fluffy fur balls in a basket. 'Which are we to have, Mr. West?'

'You can take your choice,' replied the farmer, genially. 'I prefer this one. There isn't a white hair in his coat, but they are all fine little fellows. 'I'm very busy, so I'll leave you to make up your minds.'

For the next half-hour they examined the puppies. At the end of that time the farmer popped his head in again.

'We'd like the black one, please,' said Flo and Fred together.

'Very well. I must let Master Harry Spencer know. I promised him one.'

Fred sprang to his feet excitedly. 'I'll bicycle down and tell him. Perhaps he will come back with me.'

'All right,' agreed Mr. West; 'but you'd better go and see Mrs. West in the kitchen first. She's been very busy baking.' With a twinkle in his eye the kindly farmer went away again.

'Oh, Fred,' said Flo, 'Mother said we weren't to go to the Spencers' to-day.'

The excitement died out of Fred's face. 'When did she say so?'

'When I went to say good-bye.'

'I told you not to go! Now see what you've done!

'Perhaps Mrs. Dane only meant Flo,' suggested Will.

'She didn't! She meant us both,' replied Flo.

'What did she say?' inquired Will.

'She said, "I don't want you to go to the Spencers' to-day."'

'There! what did I say? She said "you." She didn't mention Fred.'

Fred hesitated. He wanted very much to tell Harry, but did not like to go after his mother's remark.

'I'm sure she meant us both, Fred,' pleaded Flo.

'I wouldn't be told what to do by a girl,' sneered Will.

Fred hesitated no longer. 'We'll go and see Mrs. West, and then get off.'

'It's too bad!' thought Flo, angrily, as the boys went out. 'It's always the same when Fred goes out with Will. He's a horrid boy! What will Mother say? Oh, I wish I could stop him.'

She stood at the stable-door, far too miserable to go into the kitchen. Leaning against the wall were the three bicycles. As her eyes fell on them a sudden idea came into her head. She gave a quick glance round. No one was in sight. The next minute she had driven a pin through the tyre of Fred's back wheel. Without waiting to watch the result she fled back into the stable with a wildly beating heart, and knelt down again by the puppies. For some time she stayed, till footsteps made her look round.

'Well, Miss Flo,' said Mrs. West, entering, 'can't you drag yourself away? Come with me, dearie. I have some of your favourite little cakes.'

In Mrs. West's company she felt she dared face the boys again. They had finished tea. Fred avoided looking at her, and spoke to Mrs. West.

'Thank you very much for the tea. It's been ripping. We will call for Flo on the way home from the Spencers'.

'Aren't you feeling well, dearie?' inquired the kind hostess, noting how slowly Flo was eating.

Flo was about to answer that she did, and try to look as if she were enjoying her meal, when Fred rushed in again.

'Oh, I say, Mrs. West, my bicycle is punctured. Isn't it a bother! Will you let me have a basin of water to find the hole?'

When he had gone Flo heaved a sigh of relief. Evidently he had no suspicions. She suddenly found her appetite, and enjoyed her tea thoroughly.

It was a long time before he returned again. 'It's taken an awful age to find the hole,' he explained. 'It was hardly bigger than a pin-point.'

Flo grew scarlet, but fortunately Fred was not looking at her, and continued: 'We must go straight home now. It's too late to go to the Spencers'. Will has gone on.

They bade good-bye, and were soon on their way.

At their gate Mrs. Dane was watching for them. 'Come along, dears,' she said. 'It's nearly bed-time. Remember we must be up early.'

Over supper they told about the puppy. 'Harry Spencer is to have one too,' said Fred.

'Poor Harry!' said Mrs. Dane. 'I have some bad news about him. He's down with scarlet fever, so all their holiday is spoilt. Mrs. Spencer wrote to me a few days ago telling me they feared it, and to-day the doctor says it is so.'

Fred grew rather white. 'Won't the others be able to go away to the sea, Mother?'

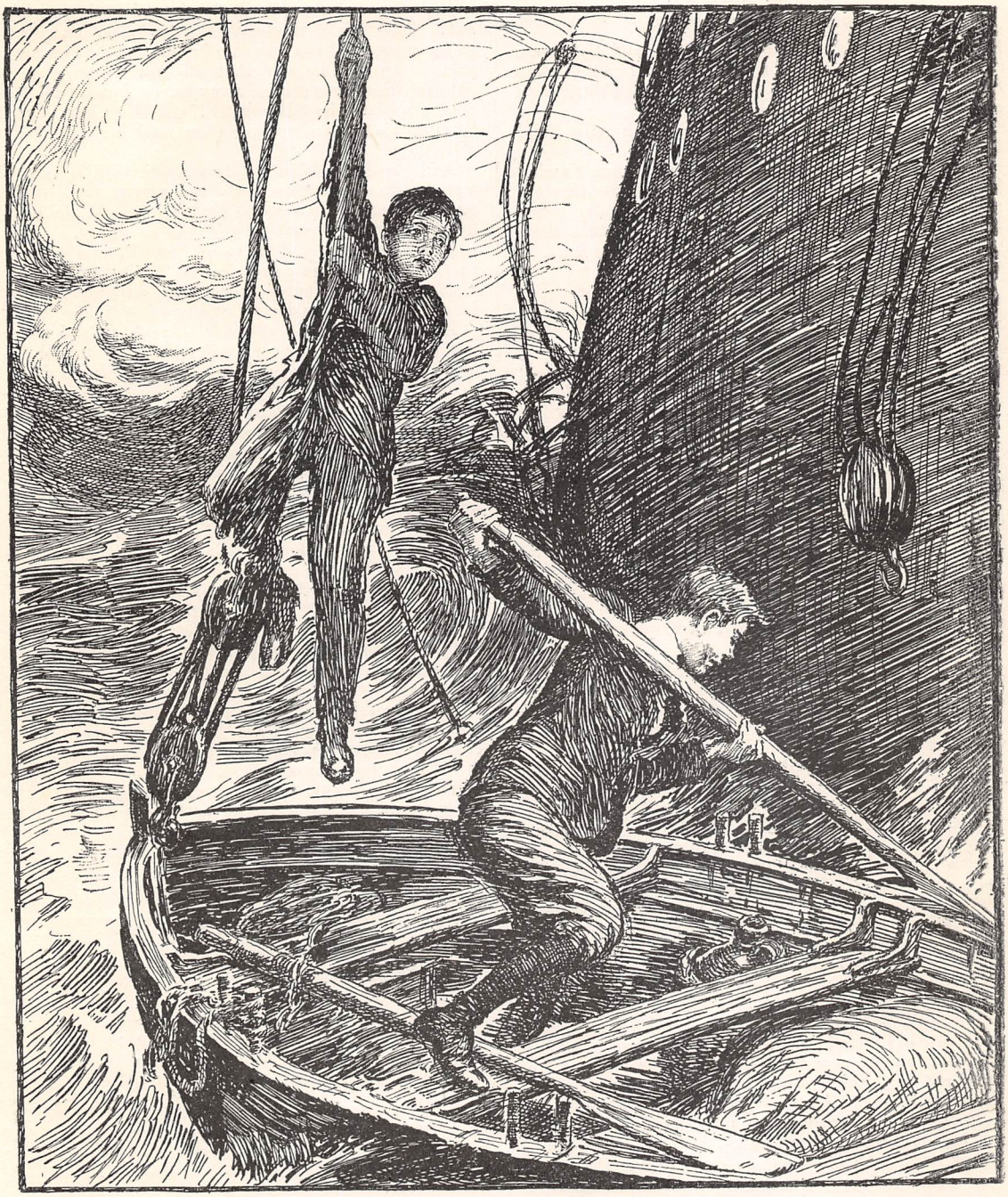
'No, dear. You see they have been with Harry, so some of them may have taken it.'

They finished their supper, and went upstairs. On the way Fred stopped. 'I say, Flo,' he said, 'suppose I had gone to the Spencers' to-day! What should we have done? Isn't it a mercy my bicyle's punctured?'

Flo hesitated. Should she tell or not? Perhaps better not!

'It is!' she agreed fervently.

"'You can take your choice,' replied the farmer, genially."



"They had won clear."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 99.)

THE bonfire was burning gaily again, and they were just about to push off the raft once more, when Sandy, who had turned to gather up a last load, gave a sudden cry of terror. Dick turned round sharply, and to his consternation, saw smoke issuing in a great cloud from the hold.

No need to ask what had happened. Some flaming brand from their bonfire had fallen, wind-borne, through the hole in the deck, and set light to the dry straw below. In an instant, the smoke gave way to a sheet of flame, and the strange cruel note of fierce burning told them that the fire had gained a firm hold.

There was no time to do anything, no time or possibility to stop the blaze; they would be lucky, indeed, if they escaped with their lives.

Already the flames were sweeping across the deck, but the breeze blew athwart the ship, so that the side upon which the boys stood was to windward, and they were more or less safe for the moment.

'Run for it, Sandy!' Dick shouted, above the roaring of the fire. 'Run to the boat for your life!'

The boat hung, as we know, from davits upon the further side of the ship. The boys were unable to pass between the mass of flame and the galley, so, in order to reach her, they were obliged to run right forward, and round the other end of the deck-house.

Dick had seen, in a flash, that it would be sheer touch and go whether they could get the boat away in safety. As the barque slowly veered with the breeze and sea, the flames would be swept forward obliquely, with the wind behind them.

Already, as they reached the side of the ship, the hot breath of the fire scorched their cheeks, already little blisters showed upon the boat's side, and the danger of one of the rope-falls igniting and so burning through was imminent.

Without a second's hesitation, Dick rushed to the after fall, the one nearest to the fire.

'Let go the other rope, Sandy,' he shouted, as he untwisted his own from the pin. 'Let it go, and lower away easy . . . don't try to hurry too much!'

Although their lives depended upon quickness, Dick had the sense to see that if they lowered the boat recklessly, she would get out of hand and probably be swamped as she took to the water. Keeping a single turn round each pin, they both slacked away slowly and with the utmost caution, lest the heavy dead-weight should get the better of them, and all should be lost.

For Sandy it was easy enough. He was well away from danger, and, as a matter of fact, the corner of the deck-house hid from him the worst of the raging furnace aft. But as for poor Dick, he could hardly keep from crying out with sheer pain, as the little darts of flame licked his face and hands. He felt his hair singe, and smelt the burning cloth as his coat smouldered here and there, but he dared not hurry.

They must both of them slack away evenly, and at the same leisurely speed if they were to launch the boat in safety, but never had it been so terribly hard for slow-moving, patient Dick to move deliberately.

Fortunately, a heavy roll swung the ship's bow to windward, and the flames, for a moment, swept away ahead. That respite gave Dick just the time he needed. When the wave of heat surged back, the boat was within a foot of the water.

Dick threw the rope from the pin and let it go with a run. The stern of the boat fell sharply, with a slap on to the water, but she was safe by now, and, as he ran to join his brother, he saw that she towed easily by the painter, which was carried away forward and made fast.

'Slide down the fall quickly!' the elder boy gasped. 'And unhook the after one; then fend her off till I'm aboard. . . .'

As he spoke he seized Sandy and heaved him up, with a tremendous effort, on to the top of the rail, leaning against it, panting, to watch his brother as he slid deftly down the rope and reached the boat in safety.

How Dick managed to vault himself, unassisted, on to the high rail he never knew. Perhaps his urgent need gave him unwonted strength and skill, but certainly he could never have done it at any other time.

He snatched wildly at the fall, caught it, and swung out, descending hand over hand. Then he unhooked it quickly, and drawing his knife, cut through the slender painter. They had won clear.

As Dick pushed the boat from the barque's side the wood burnt his naked hand, and the softened tar stuck to his fingers. There had not been a moment to spare. He seized one of the clumsy oars, and, calling to Sandy to take the other, he set to work to row lustily. For a little his relief at their escape and his excitement got the better of his judgment, and he pulled wildly, with all his strength, without waiting for the other's weaker stroke. But he soon realised the danger of this rashness.

'All right, Sandy,' he said. 'It's my silly fault. I'm pulling you round.' And he settled down to keep time with dogged patience.

Many a time Dick wished that he could take both oars and use his utmost strength and speed to put a wide space between themselves and the danger of the burning vessel, but he forced himself to control the impulse. He knew in his heart that he could only properly handle the one, and, besides, Sandy's feelings would have been bitterly hurt.

Slowly, slowly the little boat crept on over the great rolling seas. They pulled so as to get ahead of the barque, for, with the strong breeze, the flames swept over the water astern of her, and the heat and smoke were suffocating.

(*Continued on page* 119.)

THE THRUSH.

HOW sweet—in spring—to hear a thrush
Dictating from a lilac bush;
'*See* to it—*to* it'—issuing orders—
He must be thinking of the borders;
'*See* to it—*to* it'—hear him sing—
'Come, sleepy crocuses, 'tis Spring.'

Sweet too—in summer—when they've heard,
And blossomed gaily at his word—
To hear him from the gooseberry bushes
(That shelter many thieving thrushes!)
Boldly declare he 'never *did*,'
When for his pillaging he's chid.

You ravage fruit and flower and leaf—
Yet how we love you—speckled thief!

Lilian Holmes.

THE LITTLE CROCUS-LADIES.

WHEN February-Fill-Dyke
Rides over dale and down,
Each little Crocus-lady
Puts on her silken gown.
And some are clad in purple,
And some in darkest blue,
And others shine all golden,
Or match the snowflakes' hue.

Ere yet a leaf has opened
Upon the forest tree,
They flaunt in regal colours,
As merry as can be;
They open wide the blossoms
To catch the sunshine's ray:
'The joyous Spring is coming!'
The Crocus-ladies say.

MAUD E. SARGENT.

MICHAEL ANGELO'S FIRST STEP ON THE PATH OF FAME.

(*Concluded from page* 102.)

WHEN the stranger began to ascend the great staircase, the terrified and angry boy caught his arm, crying, 'Where are you going, sir? This staircase leads to the prince's private apartments. Although he might overlook an intrusion in his gardens, he would hardly like us to come here.'

'Don't trouble about that, my young friend,' replied the stranger.

As the ill-assorted couple passed through the state apartments, the guards stood up and saluted respectfully. Michael was lost in wonder, and thought indignantly, 'Though this man may belong to the prince's household, the faun is mine, and he must give it back to me. It is my labour, and I can pay him for the marble.'

Without pausing, his guide led on through the galleries and saloons. Michael Angelo felt sure it was one of the secretaries of state he had treated so rudely.

At last the stranger threw open a room where the choicest works of art were kept, and the boy trembled to remember how he had spoken to a person powerful enough to approach unannounced the great Lorenzo de' Medici. Michael began to stammer an apology, but it was cut short by the sight of his old faun on a superb bracket amongst the finest art treasures there. His surprise seemed to amuse his guide, for he said, kindly, 'You see, my boy, that I had your faun taken from the garden to put it in a place of honour.'

'But what will the prince say when he sees my poor faun amongst so many precious treasures?'

The stranger's only answer was to hold out his hand, saying, 'I am the prince, my friend, and I deem it worthy of a place amongst them.'

Michael Angelo burst into tears, and bowing his head to hide them, he convulsively pressed the hand offered him by Lorenzo the Magnificent, who remarked, in the same kind tone that he had used throughout their conversation, 'Henceforth this is your home, my young friend. You will study art in these galleries, dine at my table, and be treated like one of my own children. My wardrobe-keeper will give you a rich velvet cloak, like those worn by Peter and John de' Medici.'

'My lord, may I go to my father and tell him of my good fortune? He turned me out of his house as a worthless and disobedient child. But he is as just as he is severe, and he will understand now that I was right in wanting to be a sculptor, for Lorenzo de' Medici has called me an artist.'

'Quite right, my boy; and you may tell your father also that your family are under my special patronage. I will receive him in my palace to-day, and I promise to give him any office in Florence he may desire.'

Old Buonarotti was breakfasting quietly in his room. Indeed, he had scarcely left it since he lost his son. Suddenly a knock was heard loud enough to make the old door shake on its hinges. The old man hastened to open it, and drew back in surprise at the sight of an excited-looking boy, whom he did not at first recognise for Michael Angelo. He was pale, breathless, bareheaded, his dress covered with dust and plaster. He sprang forward and threw himself into his father's arms.

'Begone!' cried Buonarotti, trembling with passion; 'you must remember that you are no longer my son.'

'Father, listen to me, I beg of you, before you drive me out of your house.'

'Do you want me to curse you?'

'I come from the palace.'

'I neither want to know where you come from, or what you are doing. I once had a son called Michael Angelo, and I hoped he would be the glory of my race and the joy of my old age, but I sold him to the sculptor Ghirlandajo for eighteen florins.'

'For my mother's sake, I implore you to listen to me, Father.'

'Go back to your mason's, that is your home now.'

'My home is now in Lorenzo de' Medici's palace,' answered Michael Angelo, rising proudly from his knees. 'My work lies amongst the treasures in his collection.'

'My God, my God! is the boy mad?' cried the poor father, passing quickly from rage to terror.

'Follow me to the palace, Father, and you will see for yourself that the great Lorenzo has taken me into his palace, where I am to be treated as one of his children; he is expecting you, and he will give you any office you desire in Florence.'

Old Buonarotti could not believe his ears, and wondered whether he and his son were not both going mad. But Michael Angelo did not give him longer time for thought, but dragged him by force to the palace. The old man almost believed himself in a dream, as he saw the courtiers draw back respectfully to let them pass.

When they reached the prince's closet, a page raised the portière and old Buonarotti stood with his son in the presence of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who came forward to welcome him, saying, 'Sir, I have sent for you to ask your consent to keep about my person a son of whom you may well be proud, for he promises to be one of the greatest artists of the age. My house shall be his home, and you will name his salary yourself. In return, I beg of you to ask for any office you desire in Florence, and I assure you that your request is already granted.'

'My son, your Highness,' answered the old man, trying to speak calmly, 'will be paid far above his merits if he receive five ducats monthly.'

'And for yourself, sir?'

'For myself, Prince, I ask a trifling post now

vacant in the Customs, which I feel I can fill with honour.'

'You will never be rich, my dear Buonarotti,' said the Prince, smiling; 'when you are offered any post you wish, you content yourself with a little place in the Customs.'

'It is quite good enough for the father of the mason, your Highness.'

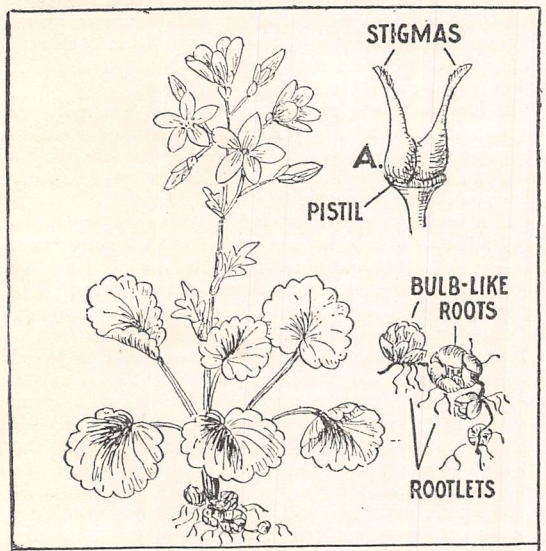
EYES THAT SEE:

THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.

IV.—IN A GRAVEL-PIT.

MY rambles to-day have brought me out into a flat part of the country—marsh-land, in fact. I came out in search of a gravel-pit, to see what I could find there of interest to you. I remembered that years ago there was a pit here in which I used to find a particular Saxifrage found nowhere else in this neighbourhood. Of course you have realised that it is the soil, largely, which influences the plants which grow on it. It is true that many plants will grow almost anywhere you plant them, but you will notice, if you keep your eyes open, that they thrive much better in some soils than others. Roses, for instance, will grow, after a fashion, in most places; but on a clay soil they are simply rampant! And so it is with wild flowers. Certain soils suit some better than others, and though seed may arrive by way of the wind, or birds may drop them, they have no sort of chance in competition with plants whose natural soil it is. It is a question of the 'survival of the fittest'—that is, the strongest wins or survives.

Now, a gravel-pit is nearly always situated where there is water near, or has been there at some time, for

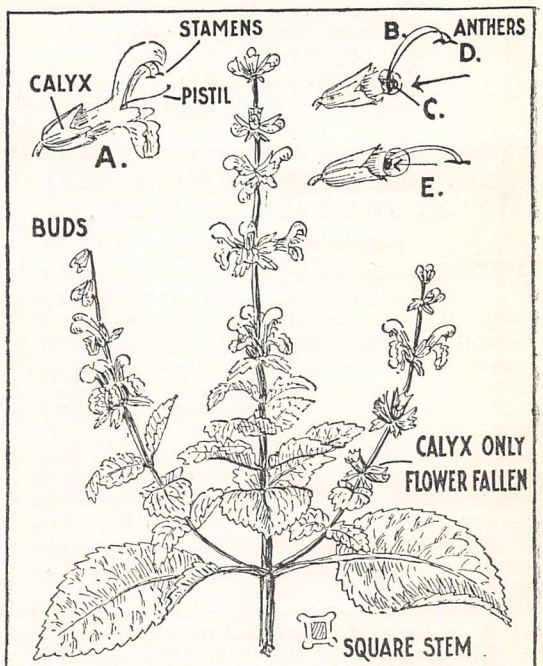


1. MEADOW SAXIFRAGE.

gravel consists of a number of small stones worn more or less round by their movement by water at an early date—maybe, hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Sometimes gravel is found many, many feet above sea-level, and this may be very old indeed, for it has been investigated by geologists, who tell us that these rounded stones were left up there when the ice which once covered all our land melted. As the ice melted, the water washed away the finer soil and left these stones.

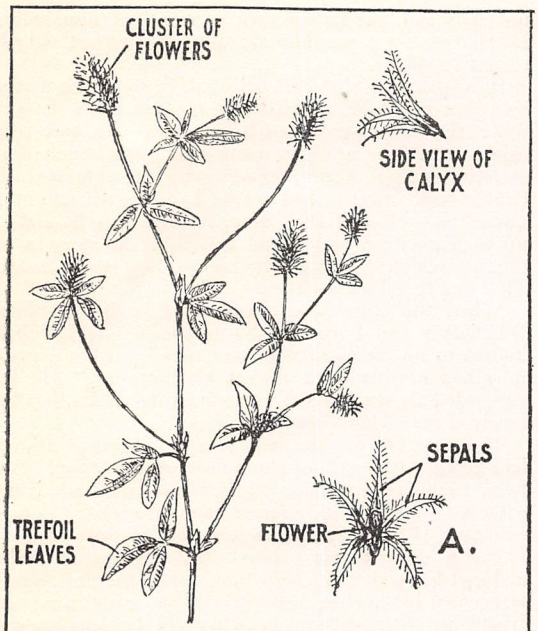
As I sit here on the edge of this low-land pit, I remember that there is a pit of that kind high up on the hills about four miles away. If those little stones could talk, what strange things they could tell us—of animals of weird shapes unknown to us and of a time when there were no pastures, trees, or flowers!

But now let us see what we have here. I had quite a long hunt among the overgrown hillocks and pool, for this pit is now 'worked out'; most of the best red



2. MEADOW SAGE.

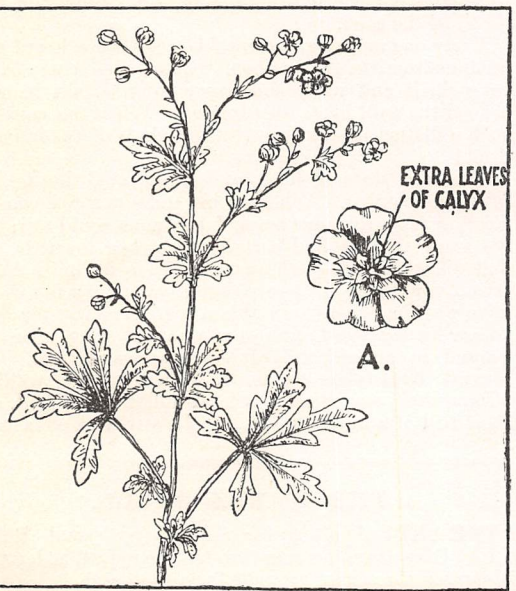
gravel has been carted away, and it is now a piece of waste land. I found my old friend, the Saxifrage, at last, when I had nearly given him up. I am afraid other botanists have found him, and knowing he is rare in these parts they have each taken away specimens till there is not much left. By the way, if you ever have the luck to find a rare plant at any time, only take a *small specimen* to press, or by which to identify it, for you must remember that this plant may be an annual, and if you gather all its flowers it has no means of reproducing itself, and you may unwittingly cause its final disappearance in that district. I am not going to even gather one piece of this Saxifrage, because he only has about six or eight flowers, so his life is at a low ebb. Here he is in fig. 1 just as I drew him as I sat by him, and I added the roots from my note-book of years ago. There are heaps of varieties of Saxifrage, but this is the largest. Its flowers are pure white, its stem rather red. See what funny little



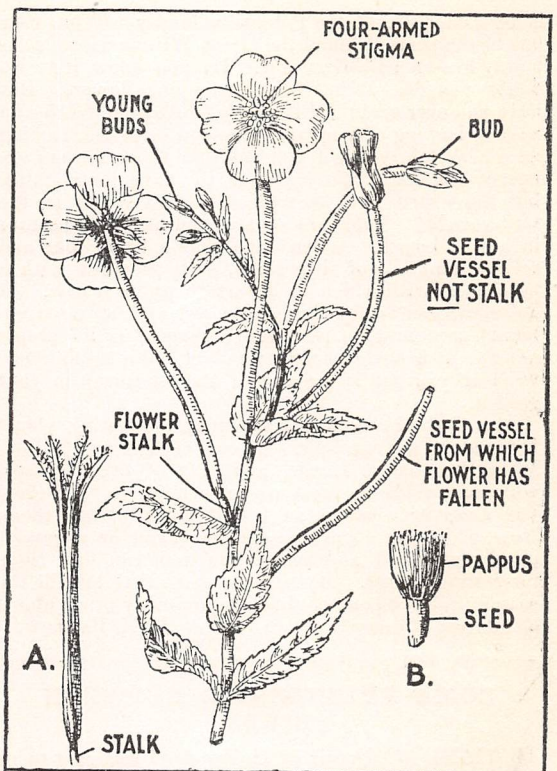
3. HARES' FOOT CLOVER

bulby sort of roots it has. You can always 'spot' a Saxifrage because he has a little forked fruit, as seen at A, and ten stamens—five long and five short. Nearly all the mosses on our rock gardens belong to this family; when they flower you should examine them for these peculiarities.

The most attractive feature in this pit is a large patch of Meadow Sage. In the distance it looks all blue



4. HOARY POTENTILLA.



5. GREAT WILLOW-HERB.

and crimson, and I wondered what it was. In fig. 2 you have a sketch of it; the flowers are purple and the calyx of each flower and the stems are crimson. This is a species rather rare in most parts of England, but common in this county of Kent. This family always interests me because it has such quaint stamens. At A is an enlarged flower, and at B I have drawn the same flower, having removed the corolla. Now, when a bee comes to a flower like this, he has to push that lump marked C out of his way before he can reach the honey down below. When he does this the whole thing moves and the part marked D comes down on his back and dusts him with pollen, as shown in sketch E.

Next I found a clover peculiar to gravel soil. At first I thought its flowers were over; but no, they were only somewhat hidden. Fig. 3 shows you a spray of this Hare's-foot Clover, and you see how fluffy are the heads of the flowers. But when I looked at it with my magnifying glass, I found these clusters were composed of a number of flowers, as shown at A; you see it is the hairy calyx which gives the fluffy look. The heads of the flowers are of a pale mauve colour.

Next I found another plant which delights in gravel, viz., Hoary Potentilla (fig. 4). This is very pretty; it has small yellow flowers, and the backs of its leaves and stems are quite white with numerous white hairs; this, of course, accounts for its name 'hoary.' The leaves are almost stalkless at top of spray, but as they develop lower they are mounted on longer and longer stalks. The flowers have a double set of sepals, one large and one small, as shown at A; this peculiarity

is characteristic of the Potentilla family. Then, near one of the pools, I found the Great Willow Herb, commonly known as Cherry Pie. Do you know it? No doubt you do. It has bright rose-pink flowers. But have you ever examined it *closely?* Now in fig. 5 you have a drawing of a spray. Are you surprised, looking at my sketch, when I tell you that those flowers are nearly *stalkless?* They appear to have long stalks, but those structures on which the flower sits are the seed-vessels! They are square, and as much as four inches in length. When ripe they split in four and release hundreds of tiny seeds, each provided with a parachute with which to depart to pastures new. At A I show you an opening seed-vessel and at B an enlarged seed and its parachute ('pappus' is its proper name). It is a very handsome plant, but a troublesome weed if you get it (or any of its relations) in your garden.

This, I think, completes the most interesting plants I found in a gravel-pit. Of course there was Milfoil, Wild Chamomile, Lignis, and lots of other flowers which one finds in most overgrown places, but these you *know* or *ought* to, so I will not illustrate them. Now, when you come across a gravel soil or a gravel-pit, look around and see if you, too, can find these interesting plants. My visit is somewhat late in the season (July), but no doubt there are many other plants of interest at other times. E. M. Barlow.

SOME FRIENDSHIPS BETWEEN BIRDS.

A HANDSOME pair of Guinea-fowl was sent to us at one time, the first of their kind that had ever been seen in our northern isle (in Shetland). We strove to tame and pet them, but perhaps the horrors of the voyage had frightened the shy creatures, for they crept away into the shrubbery, and, taking up their abode there, declined all friendly overtures.

Our father took great interest in them, but rather encouraged their desire to return to a state of nature; therefore all efforts to tame them were given up. Unless when compelled by hunger to approach the house or farmyard, they avoided both.

They had been in our possession for, I think, two years, when a very severe spring compelled the Guinea-fowl to seek for food among the other poultry. They stealthily approached the farm, and were readily permitted by the autocrat of that place, a gamecock, to pick up grain with the other fowls.

One morning terrible news reached the parlour.

The mangled remains of the Guinea-cock had been found in the farther end of the barnyard. Our father examined the body carefully. It had been struck on the head by the sharp talon of some bird of prey. Then it had been grasped by beak and claws, but for some unknown reason had not been carried off.

A magnificent Erne had been observed hovering about for some days, and the result of the post-mortem examination was a verdict of wilful murder against the rapacious eagle.

Fearing that the hen had also fallen a victim to the sea-robber, search was made in all her usual haunts, but she was nowhere to be found, and, more alarming still, Dickhalyer (our beautiful game-cock), had also vanished. Full of consternation lest his favourite had come to an untimely end, our father went in search of him, calling Dickhalyer by a peculiar clucking, understood only by their two selves.

In response to that call, Dickhalyer stepped out from behind a haystack, which stood not far from the spot where the Guinea-cock had been found. He bore some marks of a fray, and his manner had lost much of its stately dignity. Cowering close by his side was the Guinea-hen. She looked scared to a degree, and crept under the shelter of Dickhalyer's plumes, as he stalked up to his patron and friend and told the story in the tongue which a naturalist knows how to translate. This was the story:—

When the Guinea-cock was attacked by the Erne, Dickhalyer had flown to the rescue, as he had been known to do on more than one occasion when birds of prey had presumed to molest his territory. He had succeeded in scaring the Erne from its victim, but had received some slight wounds himself.

The poor Guinea-hen had been a witness of all, and had flown to the gallant champion for protection. And from that day she never left his side, although it was often a trial to her to overcome timidity when the bold, confiding Dickhalyer approached some friendly hand.

For a time it was evident that Dickhalyer rather endured her companionship than cared for it. Indeed, he seemed inclined to resent the toadying and persistent friendship of the widow; but after a little while her submission, her adoration of himself, her meek, unobtrusive acceptance of whatever crumbs of kindness he chose to extend to her, found a way to the game-cock's heart, and his manner towards her softened into such courtesy and consideration as brave men always show towards forlorn women robbed of their natural defenders.

Dickhalyer would not permit any one to ill-treat the poor thing. Even the pert Hoodie-crow, Crabba, might not try his tricks on her; so very soon the platonic friendship existing between the two became a recognised and respected relationship. For years that beautiful and unusual bond continued unbroken—until, in fact, the death of the cock.

Early one morning, lamentable cries were heard proceeding from the Guinea-hen. 'Come back, come back,' rang shrill and wild, and every fowl within hearing echoed the wail in its own tongue. When the cause of such a disturbance was sought, Dickhalyer was found—dead!

The torn state of his plumage indicated that he had fallen in combat. Whether his unknown foe was an Erne, or peregrine, or 'teevin' dog, none could tell; but we knew that he had certainly deserved his title, and had died 'game'—perhaps in defence of his helpless friend, for it was not likely that any common foe would have 'set on' so redoubtable a warrior. Not far from where he lay the Guinea-hen was cowering upon the ground in an abject state of terror and grief. For several days she wandered, disconsolately wailing, 'Come back, come back.' She would take no food, and soon died of a broken heart. Jessie M. E. Saxby.

THE EMPTY SHELL.

'BEASTLY night for that sentry,' said Bobby Carruthers, peering through the ragged hedge that separated the school grounds from the beach.

'Not so bad,' answered Ted Briarly, staring up into

the sky. 'It's cloudy and wet at present, but in another hour you'll see the wind drop, and it'll clear up and be perfectly fine—a topping night for an air raid in fact.'

'You have Zepps on the brain,' said Bobby scornfully. 'I only wish they would come. Meanwhile I'm going to cheer up that sentry—he must be jolly bored and hungry, pacing up and down there.'

'He won't speak to you while he's on guard.'

'I know that. But I've got a present for him.'

'An egg!' exclaimed Ted. 'Did you keep it from tea?'

Bobby grinned wickedly. 'I thought it would have you on. It's an empty one—blown, and a bit of shell stuck over the hole.'

Ted's face flushed. 'I call it rotten to do a thing like that to a soldier—if you gave it to some slacker who wouldn't enlist, or even an ordinary civilian ——'

'Oh, shut up your jawing!'

Bobby squeezed himself through the hedge as he spoke, and waved to attract the sentry's attention. He laid the egg carefully under a tuft of yellow horn poppy, and signalled again. The sentry was on duty, and he paid no heed to the small red-headed boy; but Bobby noticed with satisfaction that he had seen the egg, and that it lay just within his beat. A bell ringing from the schoolroom window called the boys indoors, so he could not watch the soldier long enough to see whether his trick had been successful. It had not been, perhaps, quite so amusing as he expected; Ted's words a little rankled in his mind, and he finally went up to bed with the vague hope that the sentry was not very much disappointed when he found the egg was an empty one.

The dormitory windows were carefully darkened with green blinds, but Bobby lifted the corner of one and looked out to see if he could make out the sentry's figure in the faint starlight.

'Put down that blind at once!' cried the matron sharply, coming in at the moment. 'You're showing a light right over the sea!'

'Silly fuss,' muttered Bobby as she bustled out of the room.

'I believe they've had a Zepp warning to-night,' remarked Ted. 'I saw a special constable talking to Mr. Lancaster. It's quite fine now.'

'They're always having warnings,' replied Bobby, wriggling into the sheets. 'Nothing ever happens.'

But something did happen that night. The boys slept too soundly to notice the occasional shouts of 'Put out that light' which came faintly from the town, they never realised that the trains had stopped running, they did not even hear a heavy buzzing sound rushing towards them from over the sea, but — crash! bang! every boy started from his dreams in an instant. Crash! crash! Was it thunder? No, it *was* a Zeppelin raid at last.

The matron rushed into the dormitory in her dressing-gown. 'Just get up quietly, all of you, each take a blanket off your bed, and come downstairs. The electric light is off—remember, no one is to strike a match!'

She hurried off to the next domitory, while the boys tumbled out of bed and began to feel for their shoes.

'I don't want to go down to the cellar,' grumbled Bobby. 'We should get a much better view up here. I've never seen a Zeppelin.'

'Don't dawdle, Carruthers, we're waiting for you,' came Mr. Lancaster's voice through the darkness.

Crash! crash! came the bombs. Pop! pop! pop! went the anti-aircraft guns. Bobby followed the other boys reluctantly. The cellar was dark and chilly, and there was nothing whatever to be seen from there.

'Isn't this ripping?' said Ted Briarly, whose teeth were chattering with excitement and cold. 'I wouldn't have missed it for *anything*.'

'Stop talking,' said Mr. Lancaster; 'I am going to call over the names.' He turned on a flash-light which shone redly through his fingers. Bobby answered to his name, and then slipped through the half-closed door. Nobody saw him in the darkness, and he groped his way unnoticed up the two flights of stairs, back to the deserted dormitory. He raised the blind and looked out. The town was in darkness, but he could hear the soldiers' feet clattering on the hard road, and voices shouting orders. Then would come the scream of another bomb descending, a brilliant flare of light and the crash of the explosion. Alone in the dormitory Bobby did not enjoy himself quite so much as he expected. He almost thought he would go back to the others, when — crash! the whole house shook, the glass fell out of the window, and Bobby found himself flat on his back.

He picked himself up dizzily and groped his way to the door. What was that crackling, roaring sound that seemed so near, and why had everything grown suddenly lighter? Bobby got the door open and then he understood the truth. The last bomb—an incendiary one—had set the house on fire, and a mass of flame rose between the dormitory and the staircase.

Bobby shouted for help, but the roar of the flames drowned his voice, and with a feeling of sickening fear he remembered that nobody knew where he was! He rushed back to the broken window and shouted again and again. At last he heard voices beneath the house—not of Mr. Lancaster or the other boys, but of the soldiers who had been patrolling the streets all night.

'They're all out of here, sir!' he heard a sergeant say.

'No, no! I'm here! Oh, get me out!' shrieked Bobby wildly.

How long he waited he never knew, but the smoke in the room was beginning to blind and choke him when a ladder was placed against the window, and a tall figure in khaki clambered into the room. The flickering firelight fell on the soldier's face, and Bobby recognised the sentry to whom he had given the empty egg-shell. Half dazed with the smoke he could only cling to his rescuer, who lifted him in one arm and climbed over the window-sill, when a heavy slate from the burning roof broke loose and slid swiftly down upon them. The soldier turned aside to shield the boy, and it struck him full on the arm.

* * * * *

A week after the Zeppelin raid, Private Richard Smith was lying in the hospital with a broken arm. It was the first day of the Easter holidays, and, punctually at the visiting hour, a boy with a basket in his hand followed the Red Cross nurse to Private Smith's bedside.

'I—I've brought you some eggs, real ones. I'm very sorry I gave you that beastly shell—I hope you didn't mind much ——'

The soldier's eyes twinkled as he looked at the boy's red face.

'Why, bless your heart, sir, I knew that there egg trick before you were born!' D. Percy Smith.

"The sentry was on duty."

CHATTERBOX.

STUCK IN THE MUD AND NOTHING TO EAT.

"'It isn't often a prisoner gets so well treated.'"

TRAPPED!

IT was on the way home from a long walk on a winter's day that the great adventure happened.

'If you young people,' said Police-constable Jones, when he chanced to meet the three Vane children, Hal, Richard, and Elsie, in a narrow lane, 'should see a stout old party anywhere round about, lame on one leg, and deaf as a post, you might just report the matter—he's a very suspicious character.'

The youngsters, feeling rather excited and quite important, promised that they would do so, and ten minutes later, near the cross roads, they came suddenly, as they thought, upon the very man. At least he answered to the policeman's description, saving for the fact that his deafness had yet to be proved.

'Hullo, you kiddies!' the loud, cheery voice of the stranger broke through the air, like a trumpet. ('Deaf people always shout,' was Hal's unspoken thought.) 'Can you tell me the way to Thorncliffe Road?'

'Yes, sir,' said Hal; 'we're going that way, it's the road where we live.'

He raised his voice as he spoke, mindful of the deafness of the 'Suspicious Character.'

'Hal,' Dick here spoke in a low whisper, 'hadn't we better run and tell the police? I expect he's a spy, very likely, or something of that sort.'

'No,' returned Hal softly; 'I've thought of a better plan than that.' Then in a raised voice he went on, unmindful of the surprised look on the stranger's face, 'Perhaps, sir, you would like to come along with us—we will show you the way.'

'Thanks, I will,' was the reply, given after a few moments' thought. There was a very amused twinkle in the man's eyes as he answered. All the same, he looked decidedly puzzled.

'I really ought to have taken a cab from the station,' he went on; 'a long walk doesn't quite suit my rheumatic leg.'

'If you are tired, sir,' said Hal, 'perhaps you would like to have a rest in our out-house. There is a wooden bench there and—and you would be quite comfortable.' The boy blushed as he stammered out the suggestion.

The stranger looked a bit taken aback, as though he were not accustomed to resting in out-houses. However, he agreed with suspicious readiness, and forthwith walked along with the children—in very silent fashion, however—till they arrived at the back garden gate of Number Ten, Thorncliffe Road.

Within a very little while he was in the shelter of the out-house, and in less time than it takes to tell, Hal had turned the key, which was outside, in the lock, and the 'Suspicious Character' was a prisoner.

'What are you up to, you youngsters?' shouted he. 'Open the door this minute, I say, or it will be the worse for you!'

But there was no reply, and his hammering on the door met with not the least response.

'Hal,' said Dick, 'we'd better be off to the police station, hadn't we? and tell them we've got the man they wanted.'

'Right you are,' replied Hal, feeling rather uneasy in spite of the clever capture he had made. And bidding Elsie stay at home, and not breathe a word to a soul, they raced off as fast as their legs could carry them to the police station near by. There was only Mary, the 'general,' in the house; Mother had gone into the neighbouring town on a shopping expedition, and Father (Captain Vane) was 'somewhere in France.'

Five minutes later, a timid little tap was heard at the out-house window, one of the panes of which was broken.

'Please,' it was Elsie's voice, 'it's only me. Will you promise not to escape if I open the door?'

The prisoner gave his word of honour, and little Elsie turned the key in the lock.

'I thought,' said she, when she stood face to face with the 'Suspicious Character,' 'you might be cold and hungry, so I have brought you a muffler and a piece of my birthday cake.'

'Well, now, that's very good of you,' was the reply; 'it isn't often a prisoner gets so well treated.'

'You—you don't look like anything of that sort,' said Elsie, entirely forgetful of his supposed deafness. 'I wonder—I wonder if the boys have made a mistake.'

'I wonder,' said the 'Suspicious Character,' with an amused smile; 'never mind, you and I are friends, so that's all right.'

Presently, before little Elsie realised the fact, she was chatting to the stranger in the easiest of fashions (as it happened he was neither cold nor hungry); and this was how Hal and Dick found them, to their surprise, when they came back from the police station. On each of the boys' faces was a look of shame and utter disgust, as well there might be.

'Hullo!' was the man's cheery greeting, 'where's the policeman?'

'P—please, sir,' said Hal, his cheeks burning, 'we—we have made a most idiotic mistake. They—they've got the man they wanted at the police station, and—and, oh, we do *beg* your pardon, both of us!'

'Don't mention it,' was the reply given with a hearty laugh. 'It was as much my fault as yours. I let my love of a joke carry me a bit too far this time. And now I have to own up, too. I very soon put two and two together, and found out who you were—I heard you call each other by your Christian names, you know—but I fancy you will find it a harder matter to guess who *I* am, so I'd better tell you. I am your great-uncle Ben from Australia, and I was on my way to your house to pay you a visit when you "trapped" me.'

For a short while the children were speechless with dismay (they had often heard their mother speak of 'dear kind old Uncle Ben'), and then Elsie, being the first to recover herself, saved the situation by putting her arms around his neck and giving him a kiss of welcome.

After this, their tongues were unloosened, and before many minutes had passed, they were on their way to being the best of friends.

Of course, Mother had to be told the whole story on her return a short while later, but so delighted was she to see great-uncle Ben, that somehow she forgot to scold very much, and for the rest of his visit all went merry as a marriage bell.

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

THE CHRISTMAS ELVES.

THE Christmas Elves are out to-night,
While all the land is veiled in snow;
They deck the trees with hoar-frost bright,
And bid the Yule-fires warmly glow.

They build ice-bridges o'er the stream,
Hang icicles from roofs o'erhead,
And make the holly-branches gleam
With store of berries rich and red.

They trace fair pictures on the pane,
As stars shine coldly in the skies;
When morning wakes the world again,
Their work will please the children's eyes.
For shapes of castle, flower, and tree
Will sparkle in the rosy dawn,
While Robin's Yule-tide melody
Rings out across the snowy lawn.

They flutter where the children sleep,
In cosy beds so warm and white,
And round their downy pillows creep
Through all the long, dark winter night.
They whisper tales of Christmas joys—
Of treasures Santa Claus will bring
To happy little girls and boys,
When Yule-tide bells all sweetly ring.

MAUD E. SARGENT.

THE MUSCOVY MERCHANTS.

England's First Friendship with Russia.

II.—THE FROZEN SEA.

(*Continued from page* 91.)

IT was a brave show the Muscovy adventurers made at Greenwich when King Edward VI. lay dying there. But they, too, were not far from death.

To-day it is, so to speak, only a matter of hours—thirty or so—to reach Norway from England. It took this well-furnished fleet two months to make the passage. On May 11th they were being hailed with joy at Greenwich. That night they passed Woolwich and lay off Erith. There they stayed a week. On May 18th they crept as far as Gravesend and Tilbury, the wind throughout being adverse. On the 26th they made Harwich, 'not without great loss and consuming of time.' They found there that much of their victuals, for all the care that had been taken, was unfit for use: part was corrupt, and the hogsheads of wine leaked and were not staunch. Moreover, through these delays all had begun to think of those they were leaving behind them; especially Richard Chanceler, the second in command, who had two little sons that would be orphans if he sped not well.

It seemed, then, that they came to the East Coast of England in no very prosperous case. But even when they had come so far, they were not to be fortunate. From Harwich they made Yarmouth, on May 30th. They revictualled, and sailed on June 15th, and made Aldeburgh on the 16th. On the 17th they were driven back to Orford Ness by contrary winds, and on the 19th they were again at Harwich. On June 23rd they saw the last of England.

Three weeks later, on July 14th, having voyaged this way and that over the Dogger Bank, 'traversing and tracing the seas by reason of sundry and manifold contrary winds,' they reached certain islands off the coast of Norway, where, the winds being still contrary, they stayed several days. From these islands they sailed north-north-east, and came to the Lofoden Isles, 'which were plentifully inhabited, and very gentle people.' There they lay till July 30th, when once more they sailed north-north-east, keeping the land in sight. They sought news by hailing folk on land, and asked for a pilot to the north of Finland, of which they had vague knowledge, and in which they hoped to reach a trade port or ward-house known to them. A pilot was promised if they would bear in towards land, where was good harbourage. But when they tried to draw near, they found the land very high on every side, with gusts of wind of great violence which the ships could not pass. It was late in the afternoon. The ships lost their bearings and could keep no course, and the gusts grew into a whirling tempest. Those on the *Edward Bonaventure* heard Sir Hugh Willoughby calling to Chanceler to keep near him. But Chanceler's ship did not carry the sail of Willoughby's, and could not keep company with it. The 'Admiral' ship—the *Bona Esperanza*, or *Good Hope*—was carried away with such force and swiftness that not long after he was quite out of sight. Its little boat, towed behind, was overwhelmed and sunk in the sight of the seamen of the *Bonaventure*, and the third ship—the *Bon Confidentia*, or *Good Confidence*—of ninety tons, likewise was borne away. And then there came mist, and the *Bonaventure* knew no more. He who told the tale to Richard Hakluyt wrote of Willoughby and his men: 'If the rage and fury of the sea have devoured those good men, or if as yet they live and wander up and down in strange countries, I must needs say they were men worthy of better fortune, and if they be living, let us wish them safety and a good return; but if the cruelty of death hath taken hold of them, God send them a Christian grave and sepulchre.'

The *Bonaventure* never saw the *Bona Esperanza* again: she perished, and all her crew, as shall be told.

(*Continued on page* 159.)

THE GOOD PANTHER.

ONCE upon a time there was a very good panther. At an early age he and his brother were found in the forest, having apparently been deserted by their mother. The two cubs were taken to the King of Ashanti, in whose palace they lived for some weeks, until the bigger one, while romping with his small brother, suffocated him. You may think this a bad beginning, but probably our good panther did not *mean* to kill the other; it was just an accident.

After this, the panther was sent to the Resident at Kumassi, by whom he was very successfully tamed. During meals, he would sit by his master's side, and take gently whatever was offered him. Once or twice, he helped himself to a fowl, but he readily gave it up in exchange for something else. But one morning he broke his cord, and got loose. The gates of the castle were closed, and there was a chase. The good panther, however, did not give his pursuers much trouble; after leading them round the ramparts several times, without doing more harm than knocking over a few children by running against them, he allowed himself to be caught and led back to his quarters.

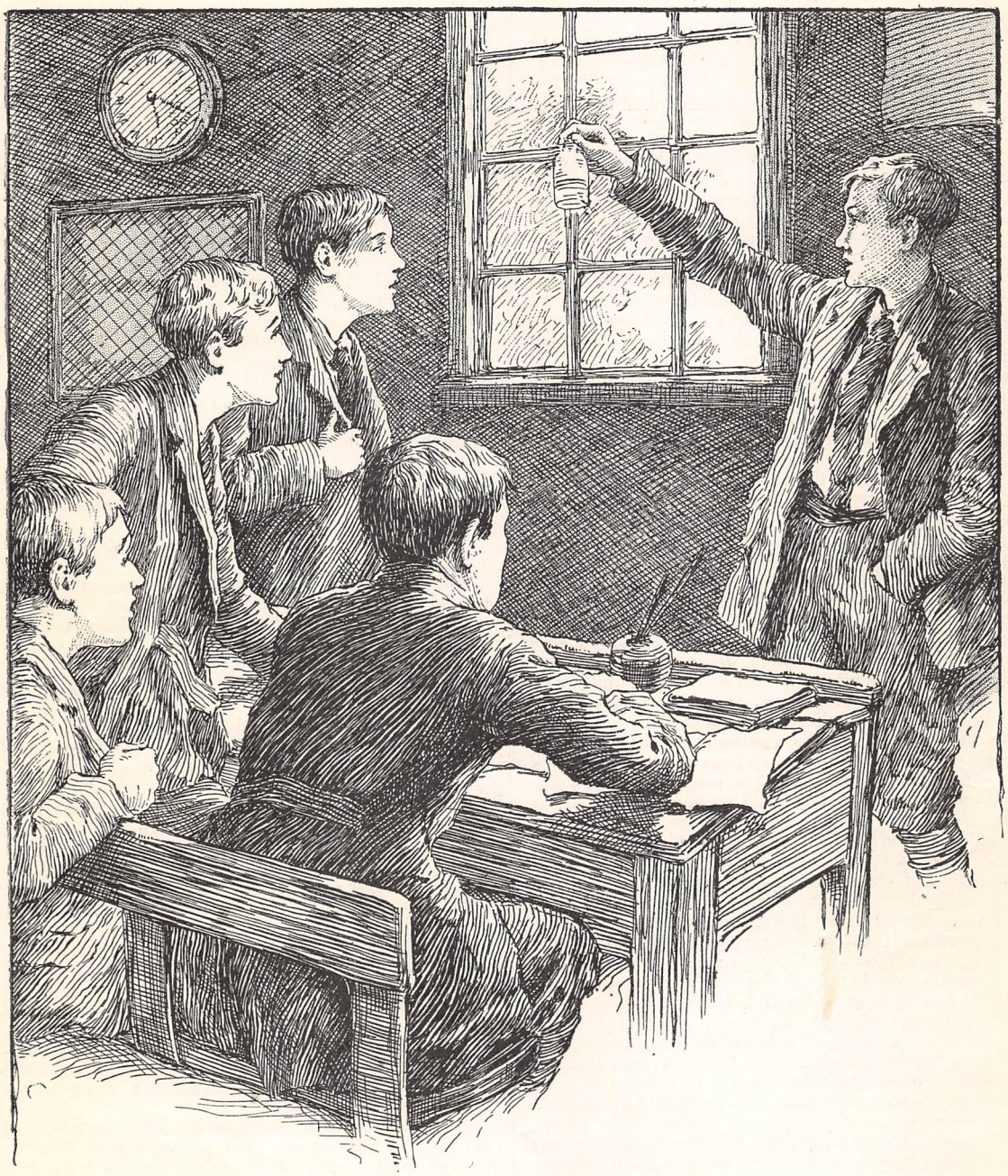
This good panther became much attached to the Governor, whom he followed about like a dog. He liked to station himself at a window which overlooked the town. Here, standing on his hind legs, and resting his chin and his fore-paws on the window-ledge, he could see all that went on. The children, too, liked this

"He looked up, and saw the panther in the doorway."

window, and one day, finding the panther in possession, with a united effort they fearlessly pulled him down.

Another day, he missed the Governor. Sadly and anxiously he wandered around the fortress in search of him. Meanwhile, the Governor returned to his private room, and seated himself at his writing-table. Presently he looked up, and saw the panther in the doorway. The animal sprang at him, and for a moment the Governor thought that he meant mischief. But the affectionate creature laid his head close to that of his friend, rubbed his cheek upon the Governor's shoulder, lashed his tail, and showed his joy in every possible way.

These incidents were related by Mrs. Bowdich in the *Magazine of Natural History*. E. D.



"'There's not much,' Marsh said, as Warren held it up to the light."

AN 'APRIL FOOL.'

'I SAY,' began Boyd, suddenly, when we were waiting for Stevens to come in and take us for Maths. —there were just six of us in a special division that term—me, Boyd, Turner, Harris, Marsh, and a chap who is always called 'Rabbit' because his name is Warren.

'What's the matter now?' asked Turner, who had spilt a lot of ink, and was mopping it up with his handkerchief.

'Ever hear of invisible ink?' Boyd continued; 'I've got some.'

'Pity Turner's isn't that kind!' said Marsh, looking at the awful mess; 'where did you get it, Boyd?'

'I made it. And do you know that next Saturday is April Fools' Day? and I've thought of a lovely trick to play on Stevens! But you'll all have to be in it, or it will be no good. It's a ripping idea!'

Boyd is an awfully funny chap, and he's always thinking of something or other. He goes away and works in the Lab, and makes discoveries, and he means to be an inventor when he grows up. Of course, his dodges don't come off every time. There was the alarm he made to waken us all in the winter—it did it all right, but at two o'clock in the morning! It had gone off about five hours too soon, and there was the most awful row, like the sound of an explosion, and we thought it was a Zeppelin at the very least. Another day Boyd was doing lines, and he said he would do some for me at the same time by using carbon paper and giving me the copy, and as they were for old Brown, who doesn't know our handwriting, I thought it would be all right. But they came out blue, and I had to go over them with ink and rub out any blue that showed, and it took an awful time, and in the end they looked so messy that Brown wouldn't take them, and I had to write them all again.

But the worst of all was Harris's toffee. Boyd said he had got something that you could mix with toffee to keep it from melting quickly when you sucked it, and it would make it last about ten times as long. Harris had just had a tin sent him from home, and he gave it him to 'treat.' When Boyd brought it back again it looked just the same, but the taste was simply awful, and Harris threw the lot at him and said he could jolly well eat the beastly stuff himself. I don't know what became of it, but Tomlins said it should be put in the School Museum. Harris was most frightfully angry, and seemed to think Boyd had done it on purpose, and went about saying he would get even with him, which was rather mean, as Boyd had offered to pay him for the toffee.

All the same, Boyd's ideas are very often ripping, and we all wanted to know how he was going to make an April Fool of Stevens, except Harris, who said he was sick of Boyd and he would only land us into a row.

'Never mind Harris,' Marsh said, 'tell us what it is,' and Boyd was just beginning when Stevens came in and told him to sit down and stop talking.

However, we heard all about it afterwards. Boyd said he had made some invisible ink, and it looked just like water, and when you wrote with it you couldn't see anything for about twelve hours, and then the writing came out quite plainly. And his plan was that on Friday night we were all to use the invisible stuff to do our algebra with, and then Stevens would think we'd done nothing.

'You see,' he explained, 'he will see nothing in our books; and then the next morning he will want to know why we haven't done it. We shall say we have, and when he looks again it's there as plain as anything. It will be a splendid lark!'

'But I say, Boyd,' Warren asked, 'will your ink really work?'

'Rather! I've tried it—look here,' and he pulled some papers out of his pocket and showed us his name written two or three times.

'You're jolly clever!' Turner said, admiringly.

'I'm not, you ass! I found how to do it in an old magazine—it's quite easy.'

'But won't Stevens be raggy?' Rabbit asked.

'No, he's jolly decent,' Boyd said; 'I wouldn't try it on any one, of course, but Stevens is awfully sporting. He won't mind, and it will be awful fun. Think of his face when he sees our books—he will be jolly surprised.'

'Are you sure Saturday is the First?' Turner asked.

'Of course it is, and we won't be able to do it for another year if we don't do it now. You will, won't you?'

We talked a bit more, and then decided it would be a lark to try it on. But Harris said he didn't know if he'd have anything to do with it, as he had had quite enough of Boyd's beautiful dodges.

'Oh, do dry up, if you mean that beastly toffee!' shouted Boyd.

'It wasn't beastly till you started messing with it!' Harris retorted, and they were almost having a fight, but the bell went for tea and that put an end to it.

'Look here, Harris,' Turner said, as we all moved off, 'you'll be in it, won't you? It will spoil everything if you stop out.'

'Oh, never mind,' Boyd said; 'let him stick out if he wants. We jolly well don't care.'

But the next day Harris said he had changed his mind, and he thought it would be rather fun.

'That's all right then,' Turner said. 'I say, we shall have to get our algebra done some time on Friday afternoon, won't we?'

'Yes,' Boyd agreed, 'we can't be passing round the ink in Prep.'

'Where is the ink?' asked Marsh.

'On the shelf behind the door in the Lab,' Boyd told him. 'I say, we shall do our algebra directly after tea, shall we?'

So on Friday afternoon we all collected together, and Boyd went to get the bottle. 'I saw Harris in the corridor near the Lab,' he said, when he came back, 'and I told him to come, but he said he was busy and he'd do his after, so don't use it all.'

'There's not much!' Marsh said, as Warren held it up to the light.

'It's half full,' Boyd said; 'give it a shake, Rabbit!' So Warren shook it up and then took out the cork, and we all started. Of course we had to work the sums out first, and they were equations with two unknowns and took some time.

Boyd finished his first and began to copy them out. 'You can't see what you're doing, you know,' he began; 'it's awfully rummy,' and we all found it was when we came to ours.

Harris asked for the invisible ink after tea and said he was going to do his then, so Boyd gave him the bottle. And after Prep, when the algebra books had been given in, Rabbit got awfully gloomy and said he wished we hadn't done it. 'We're sure to get into a row,' he told us; and Harris burst out laughing, and said he thought it was jolly likely!

'It isn't,' Boyd declared; 'it's only fun, and Stevens won't mind, will he, you chaps?'

'Of course he won't!' Marsh agreed.

(*Concluded on page* 123.)

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 106.)

IT seemed an age before the wind blew cool on the boys' faces, and they knew that, for the moment, they were out of the fire's reach. Yet they dared not pause nor rest. Every minute the blaze spread and strengthened, and falling embers began to splash and fizzle in the water around them. The barque by now was a furnace from end to end, and the great sweep of flame was broken only by the blackened stump of the one mast. That still stood, even though the rigging was all burnt away.

There was a great burst of sparks and smoke as the whole of the deck fell in, and now the poor barque's charred old ribs began to show pathetically where the timbers between them were destroyed. The mast came down with a crash, the flames leaped higher for a moment, then seemed to subside a little. Straw burns well, but it burns quickly, and already there was lack of fuel.

Now at last it was safe to rest. With a simultaneous sigh of relief, the two boys drew their oars inboard, and Sandy turned to face his brother.

For a few instants he stared; then he burst into a shout of half hysterical laughter.

'Oh, I c-can't help it!' he gasped convulsively. 'Oh, I wonder if I look half as funny!'

'You couldn't look any funnier than you do, if that's what you want to know!' Dick retorted, scarcely able to keep from rueful laughter himself, in spite of the pain of his scorches.

A weird sight they both looked in the flickering glare from the burning ship. Their faces were white and ghastly, except where they were smeared with black, and blood trickled from a little wound in Dick's forehead, where a splinter had struck him.

It was not until this moment that the elder boy had had time to realise the extent of his hurts. His hands were sore and blistered, his neck was scorched, and, although the cut on his forehead was only a trifling one, it smarted badly. Both boys were stiff and aching with the unwonted exercise, for to pull a ship's boat, however small, in a heavy sea, is no light work, even for a man. Now that they had time to think and feel, it seemed as if they could do no more.

'Look!' Sandy exclaimed suddenly, pointing over Dick's shoulder.

As he spoke the barque gave a lurch forward, her stern tilted high in the air, and, with no further warning, she sank like lead. There was a dull explosion, a burst of white steam, and then darkness—darkness, absolute and profound.

Coming so quickly, after the brilliant glare, the change was startling in the extreme. One moment the luckless *Sea Rover* was there, blazing fiercely, and lighting up the scene for miles round; the next moment there was nothing.

The boys were alone, alone in a leaky open boat, in a world of darkness and of hungry, sullen seas.

CHAPTER VII.

LITTLE wonder that the boys were appalled, almost stunned by what I can only call the horror of the sea, when the light died utterly, and they were left alone.

There was a faint moon by now, but it was only enough to exaggerate the sweeping curves of the great, rolling swell. One moment they were in a cup of inky blue-black water, the next, raised on a smooth crest, they could see a hundred like it racing towards them and away; treating their little boat as it might be a leaf floating on the ripples of a stream.

Never before had they felt so utterly small and helpless, and when Dick spoke it was in an awed whisper, although steadily enough.

'Get down into the bottom of the boat, Sandy,' he said quietly. 'Carefully now, and keep still when you're there. I'm coming to lie by you.'

Sandy obeyed in subdued silence, and as soon as he was settled safely into his place, Dick climbed over the thwarts and joined him.

'It's not a bit of good trying to do anything now, while it's dark. We must wait for daylight,' he whispered. 'Cheer up, old man, we're quite safe, really.'

'Oh, Dick,' murmured the younger boy. 'It's awful. How can we be safe? Look at those waves—right over us.'

'Nonsense, Sandy; this boat would float upright for years, if it was left to itself. It's like a chunk of wood. Let's go to sleep.'

'Oh, Dick, how can we?' Sandy protested.

'Quite easily. Good-night.'

Dick snuggled down, throwing one arm over his brother, and the younger boy yielded to the stronger will. In a few minutes they had both forgotten their troubles. They were utterly worn out, and not even the smarting of Dick's burns could keep him awake longer.

When they again faced their situation, it was under very different conditions. They were aroused by a warm sun which set their clothes drying, and put new life into their stiff and weary bodies. The sea was nearly smooth by now, the awesome swell had subsided, and their boat swayed easily on the sparkling waves.

Sandy was the first to move. He sat up and looked about him, delighted by the fresh and cheery aspect that everything seemed to wear.

'Wake up, Dick!' he cried, shaking him by the shoulder. 'Let's get some grub. I'm simply starving.'

Poor Dick was not quite so ready to look on the bright side of things this morning as his younger brother. His burns were very painful, and he realised more fully the seriousness of their position. However, it would not do to discourage Sandy, and he partly forgot his own troubles as he watched the high spirits of the other boy.

They had provisioned the boat amply, so that they were able to make a good meal, and Dick wisely refrained for the moment from preaching economy.

'Well, Dick,' said Sandy with a sigh of repletion when they had finished, 'the sooner we get ashore the better, I s'pose. I'm game for rowing miles and miles now.'

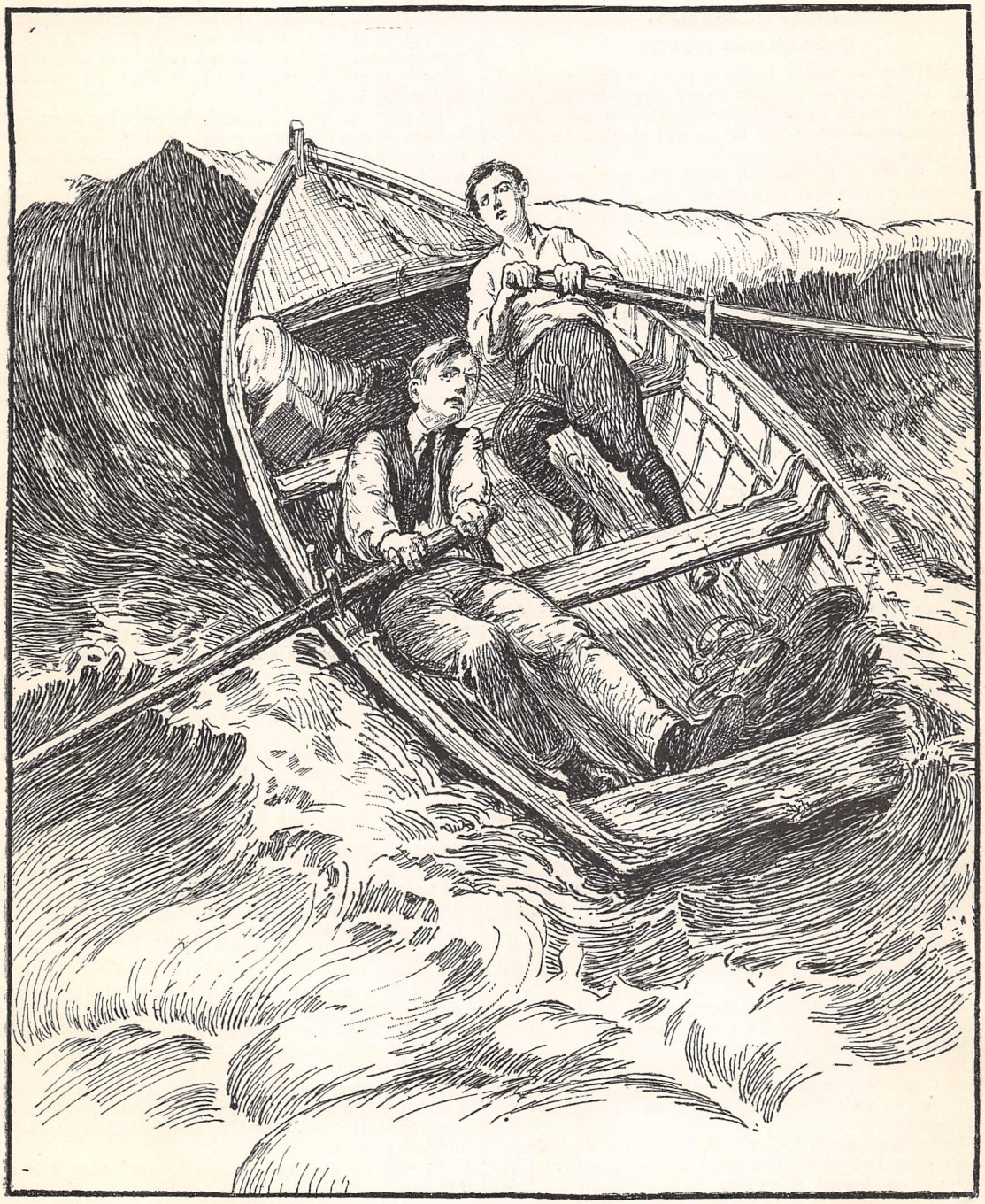
'So am I, for that matter,' said Dick. 'But I'm bothered if I know which way to go: that's what is troubling me, Sandy. You haven't seen any sign of the land, have you?'

'No, I haven't seen it this morning, but it must be where it was yesterday.'

'Clever boy! But where's that?'

(*Continued on page* 122.)

"'You haven't seen any sign of the land, have you?'"



"'I—can't—stick this—much longer,' panted Sandy."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 119.)

HERE was a facer. Lying so close to the water, the boys could see for only a very short distance, and it was all the same whichever way they turned; there was nothing anywhere but bright and sparkling waves, and a cloudless sky.

But Sandy in his present mood was not to be discouraged even by such a tough problem as this, and his quick intuition helped them sooner, if not more surely, than Dick's slower wits.

'Why, I know where it is!' he said suddenly. 'The sun rose over it yesterday morning, when we saw it first, don't you remember? It's not very far from sunrise now, so it must be just over there,' and he pointed eastward.

'Well done, young 'un!' Dick applauded him. 'And I'll tell you what it is, the wind's blowing just that way too. If we keep it in our faces, we shan't be far wrong.'

They lost no more time in getting to work, and, stripping off their coats, they started to pull away down wind.

With short spells for rest, they kept going bravely for nearly three hours, but by that time the heat was too great for further efforts. The sun had sucked up the wind, as sailors say, and it beat down upon them so fiercely that they were forced to seek shelter.

By stretching their coats from gunwale to gunwale, they managed to rig up a low awning under which they lay. Fortunately, they still drifted shoreward with the current, and, had they only known it, they made nearly as much headway as before.

As the afternoon wore on, the shore breeze sprang up again, encouraging them to take another spell at the oars. They were pulling away sturdily and silently, when suddenly Sandy called out that his oar had struck a rock.

'I'm certain it hit something awfully hard,' he cried. 'What can it be? Do you think we've run aground?'

'Nonsense!' Dick retorted, rather irritably, for he was hot and very tired. 'You caught a crab, that's what it was. You'd better be more careful or you'll be over backwards.'

'Well, all I can say is, it was a jolly big crab,' Sandy said, aggrievedly, and peered over the side to take an observation.

Almost immediately, he started back with a jerk which shook the boat, and a cry of utter terror.

'Look, Dick, look!' he gasped.

Dick also leant over the side of the boat, Dick also fell back with an exclamation of amazed alarm.

'What an awful brute!' he cried, and stared at Sandy, white-faced.

There, close beneath the boat, floated the dark shape of a fish, and of such a fish as neither of the boys had ever seen or dreamt of before. It was some eight feet long and like a shark in shape, but its head was, for all the world, like a great hammer. A more fearsome looking beast it would be hard to imagine, and it is little wonder that its aspect put an end to Sandy's rowing for the day.

He drew his oar inboard and, announcing shakily that he was done up, he left his thwart and retired to the stern sheets. There is something about a shark, at such close quarters as this, which will daunt even the strongest man, and it was not surprising that the boy sat white and shivering for long after the great brute had disappeared.

By the time night fell, and the boys lay down in the bottom of the boat once more, a brisk breeze was blowing; fortunately, it was from the north-west by now, and towards the south-east the boat drifted slowly.

A great surprise was in store for the two boys when they awoke to another bright, clear morning.

Stretching far away to the northward, and dim and shivering under the first rays of the rising sun, was a long, low coast. Their boat rocked in the mouth of a broad bay, which was bounded on their right by a high, rocky island.

Right in front of them was a city, of which the walls skirted the water's edge, unbroken except by two square, castellated towers. So unreal did it seem with its white pinnacles and houses shimmering in the misty light, that, for a while, the boys gazed at it as in a dream.

It was Sandy who broke the silence. 'Dick,' he whispered, 'it's a town out of the Bible.'

'What do you mean?' said Dick. 'Why do you say that?'

'Don't you see? The palm-trees, and the little white dome things, and the towers... it's just exactly like a Bible picture. Oh, Dick, wherever can we be?'

It was perfectly true. The scene resembled exactly one of those pictures of the Holy Land with which every boy and girl is familiar from their babyhood, and, as if to make the semblance closer, just at that moment a long line of camels emerged from the shadow of the wall and moved slowly along the shore.

'Anyway, it looks a jolly fine place,' said Dick, drawing a long breath; 'and the sooner we're there, the better. Let's pull a bit.'

Out came the oars once more and the pair were soon hard at work, breasting the seas, which seemed heavier as they neared the coast.

They soon realised, however, that it was little they could do or leave undone, for the wind had them in its grip, and drove them towards the further arm of the bay. They saw, too, that they must stick to their oars without flinching, for every moment the seas mounted higher, and there was little doubt, even to their inexperienced eyes, that, if the boat turned broadside on, she would be quickly swamped.

Up one roller she climbed, till it seemed as if she would turn a somersault backwards, then she would recover with a jerk, and dive deep into the hollow beyond. That was the time when they must pull with all their weak strength, lest the next wave should swing round the boat's stern and roll her over.

Higher and higher curled the crests as the water shoaled in the shallow bay. They seemed to rush down upon them like vicious beasts, determined to get the best of their poor defence.

'I—can't—stick this—much longer,' panted Sandy. 'Can't—I—rest?'

'Good Heavens, no!' Dick cast a quick glance over his shoulder as he spoke. 'Mustn't think of such a thing! We're close to the beach now. Stick to it, for your life, Sandy—it'll soon be over now!'

(*Continued on page* 130.)

AN INSTRUCTIVE EXPERIMENT WITH WATER.

HERE is an experiment—or scientific trick, if you like to call it so—that any boy or girl can perform. Place three basins in a row upon the table, one containing hot water, another cold, and the last tepid or luke-warm water. Roll up your sleeves and plunge one hand into the hot water and the other into the cold. Keep them there for a few moments, then put both hands quickly into the tepid water, which should be in the middle basin. The hand that was previously in the hot water will now feel cold, while the one that has been in the cold water will feel quite hot. We say that a thing is hot or cold according to what it feels like when touched; but from this experiment you will see that we might easily make a mistake in this way. The water in the middle basin cannot be both hot and cold at the same time, yet it seems hot to one hand and cold to the other.

AN 'APRIL FOOL.'

(*Concluded from page* 118.)

ALL the same, we felt rather queer when we were getting our books ready to go to Stevens' classroom the next morning. Every one had been playing April Fool dodges, and when Marsh was wildly excited, yelling for his *Hall and Knight*, Harris shouted, 'It's in my desk!'

Marsh went over and threw up the lid of the desk, and Harris was just going to shout 'April Fool!' when Marsh said suddenly, 'Hullo, what are these? There are two bottles here, just the same size.'

'Oh, that's my ink,' Boyd said; 'give it me, Marsh,' and he came over to take it—'that's the one, the bottle with the little crack in it.'

'But this one's half full—this must be yours,' Marsh said: 'this is the one we used and the little bit we left for Harris.'

'Let me see,' Boyd said, looking at them. 'I say, Harris,' he went on, but Harris had gone.

'I wonder what he has done?' Boyd said. 'I know this is the bottle my ink was in, and how can it be half full still when we used it?'

'This is the one we gave Harris,' I said, holding up the other: 'I remember there was just this much in——'

'I believe he's been up to some trick,' said Turner; 'one of these inks looks yellower than the other.'

'Well, this is mine,' Boyd declared, 'and it's half full. We had better go and ask him.'

So we all trooped off to Stevens' classroom, and found Harris there alone.

'Look here,' Boyd began wrathfully, 'we found these two bottles in your desk—what have you been doing to my ink? You've changed the bottles or something! I know this is my one, and it's half full—and this is the one I found in the Lab. when I went for it yesterday.' And he held up the one which was nearly empty. 'Did you change them?'

'Wouldn't you like to know!' Harris said, grinning at us.

'Oh, tell us!' shouted Marsh.

'All right, I may as well. I suppose I can make you April Fools if I like—I put water in the bottle you used!'

'You didn't really?' Turner and I broke out, both at once.

'You didn't!' repeated Boyd; 'you wouldn't be such a sneak!'

'Why, it's April Fool's Day!'

'But that's a beastly kind of April Fool—besides, you were in it yourself!'

'You said I needn't be in it if I didn't want. You don't seem to like jokes when they're played on you!' And Harris grinned again.

'Well, of all the mean little wretches!' Turner shouted; 'you just wait till after!'

'But we shall get into an awful row,' wailed Rabbit; 'we haven't done any algebra now! You haven't either, Harris, you know!'

'Of course I have. Do you think I'd be such an ass? I did mine properly! You're regular April Fools, all of you!'

'And you're a beastly little sneak, Harris!' Boyd was yelling, 'to take my invisible ink and put water instead——' but he stopped suddenly, for Stevens came into the room.

'How is it I always find you shouting, Boyd?' he said; 'what's the matter now? And who has been taking your invisible ink and putting water instead? Anyway, settle it afterwards, please, and sit down now!'

So Boyd sat down, and Stevens went up to his desk and began to pick up our exercise-books, while we all looked at each other and wondered what would happen. 'I should like to know,' he began, 'why I have no algebra in from five of you—Harris is the only one who did his work last night——'

'Please, sir,' Boyd burst out, 'it was my fault really,' and he began to explain the whole thing, but said nothing about Harris, only that we had got hold of the wrong bottle by mistake, and it had only plain water in.

Stevens looked as if he were going to laugh for a minute, but he didn't. He turned to Harris. 'You did your algebra properly, Harris,' he said.

'Yes, sir,' Harris answered, getting rather red; and Stevens stared at him, and I am sure he thought he was a sneak, for he must have known quite well that he had changed the bottles. You see, he couldn't help having heard Boyd as he came in.

'Well, you five boys,' he said to us, after a pause, 'I don't mind a joke—especially as it's only once a year and as you have really done this algebra, so I'll say nothing more about it. But you must get it copied into your books properly, some time before next Saturday. You understand?'

'Yes, sir—thanks awfully,' we all said, thinking what a brick he was and how easily we had got off.

'As for yours, Harris,' he said, 'it is so abominably done that you will stay in for the whole of this afternoon, and I will give you some extra work.'

Harris didn't say anything, but he looked rather blue.

'And now all of you turn to page ninety-eight,' Stevens went on, 'and start working the examples there.'

When the bell had rung and Stevens had gone, Turner said it was about time to pay Harris out.

'Oh, let him alone,' Boyd said, 'he hasn't done us any harm.'

'Besides, he's got to stay in this afternoon, and it's a half!' added Rabbit.

"'How is it I always find you shouting, Boyd?'"

'I don't care!' put in Harris.

'That's a good thing,' Marsh said cheerfully; 'anyway, I jolly well think you're the April Fool, Harris!' and you bet we all agreed with him.

All the same, being an April Fool seemed to do Harris good, for he got quite decent afterwards, and didn't try to play any more rotten tricks. And when Boyd got some chocolate sent on his birthday, he gave him a lot of it to make up for the toffee that he had spoilt; so they're quite chummy now, and Boyd is at present inventing a new kind of wick for Harris's bicycle lamp.

ISABEL LADE.

BOYS OF ENGLAND THROUGH THE AGES.

III.—YOUNG APPRENTICES.

IN the Middle Ages, Cheapside, known then as West Cheape, was the centre of the market place of London. Although the street contained some 'fair dwelling-houses,' most of the buildings on the south side belonged to goldsmiths, and those on the north side to drapers and silk-merchants; while of the smaller streets on either side, Poultry was given up to fowl-sellers, Friday Street to sellers of fish for the weekly fast-day, Bread Street to the bakers, Ironmonger Lane to metal-workers, and so on.

The houses in Cheape were four storeys high, and, although they were built of wood and had only curtained holes without glass for windows, they were then considered fine mansions, and were decorated outside with statues let into the woodwork and richly gilt, while on each house were painted the arms of either the Company of Goldsmiths or the Company of Mercers.

In front of the houses, stalls with wooden roofs were set up for the display of merchandise, and here stood the salesmen or 'journeymen,' as they were called, those on one side of the street shouting out the weight of gold chains and buckles, while those on the other clutched

"A cure for the idle apprentice."

"Others make themselves seats of ice as great as millstones."

passers-by by the sleeve to draw their attention to gaily-coloured velvets and silks. Inside the shops other journeymen worked under the direction of the master goldsmiths or the merchants, who turned aside now and again with a word of instruction or a sharp reproof to the boy apprentices who copied designs on metal, or laid rolls of cloth at the feet of customers.

These apprentices worked from six in the morning till six at night, and when they were idle their master flogged them. When a boy became an apprentice, which he did in order to learn enough of a craft or trade to follow it later by himself, an agreement was signed and sealed between the boy's father and his new master. In this it was declared that the boy should work diligently at whatever work might be given him during his term of apprenticeship, which was usually for seven years, but occasionally for as long as twelve years. During that time he would receive no wages, but his master would give him as much instruction as was necessary, provide him with bed and board in his own house, and give him at least one new suit of clothing a year. Sometimes also the master received a small fee when the agreement was signed, and later had to give a few pounds to the apprentice when he went away to be a master on his own account.

On Saturdays and at festivals such as Shrove-tide, Easter, and the Day of St. Bartholomew (August 24th), the apprentices left work at three in the afternoon, but these days seemed far too seldom, and, consequently, if the boys were left alone, even for a few minutes, they usually took the risk of a flogging later on, and ran out into the street to play at leap-frog or blind-man's buff, or 'to trye it out at foote-ball.' The apprentices of each trade—the goldsmiths, the mercers, the merchant-tailors, the cutlers, the stationers, and so on—owned a ball, and rivalry was keen in a rough 'knock-about' game up and down the streets.

In those days, not only were the streets narrow, but the shopkeepers who put up booths claimed after a while that the ground on which they stood belonged to the houses, and proceeded to build second and third storeys on top of the stalls, so that the two sides of the street grew constantly nearer. There was not much traffic, for chariots were unknown, heavy carts were forbidden by law, and whenever a carriage came through the City, its horse had to be led by hand. But the wealthy citizens and aldermen who made the laws of the City resented the commotion made by boys playing football in the streets, and therefore an attempt was made to confine these games to the recognised holidays.

About the same time, some of the masters and merchants tried to get more work out of the boys by an invention which they called 'a cure for the idle apprentice.' It consisted of a heavy iron bracelet attached by a very short chain to a nail or screw. The nail was driven into the desk or bench, and the bracelet locked round the boy's wrist, so that he was a captive until his master chose to release him.

But on the regular festivals and holidays, when tools were laid aside, and all the boys of London gathered in the fields, and the merchants, too, came on horseback as spectators, the apprentices were the leading spirits both at games and sports. Besides football, they played at ninepins; they also ran races, with a stile as the winning-post, wrestled, danced, held sham fights with wooden pikes, practised with bows and arrows, and held competitions at jumping.

On other days the crowd assembled on the banks of the Thames and held a kind of regatta, in which the principal excitement was seen when a boy, standing in a small boat, which was rowed swiftly down-stream, tilted with a lance at a board fixed to a tree, and by the sudden impact lost his balance and was tossed head over heels into the water.

On holidays in the winter, the boys went to a marsh on the north side of the City (near the modern district of Clerkenwell), and there played on the ice. Then, in the words of a monk who lived in the reign of King Henry II., 'some, striding as wide as they may, do slide swiftly; others make themselves seats of ice as great as millstones, one sits down, many hand-in-hand do draw him, and one slipping on a sudden, all fall together; while some tie bones to their feet and under their heels, and shoving themselves with poles shod with iron, do slide as swiftly as a bird flieth in the air, or an arrow out of a cross-bow.'

Sometimes tournaments were held on the ice when two boys would charge each other, and hit out with sticks as they slid past. A good many bruises were caused both by the clubs and by falling on the ice, but after the indoor life of an apprentice, working day after day at his bench, the glorious excitement of skating and fighting was worth the risk of cut fingers and bumped heads.

THE HEDGEHOG.

YOU may not think me beautiful, nor want me for a pet;
You may say I am spikier than any one you've met;
But you must own,
If let alone,
I never hurt you yet.

I'm really very harmless as I trot about alone,
But boys will always seem to think I'm only meant to stone.
If I had not
These prickles got,
They'd cut me to the bone.

You ask me what I feed on? Well, I take what I can find—
A beetle or an insect, or a grub I never mind;
A frog, a snake,
I sometimes take,
Or eggs of any kind.

My home is in a hollow tree, and there I curl up tight.
I often sleep the whole day long, and wander out at night.
My food, you see,
Is apt to be
More wary when it's light.

And have I many enemies to catch and eat me up?
Well, none of them can tackle me, not even yonder pup.
And so, if he
Depends on me,
I fear he will not sup.

There's not an animal about can touch my prickly ball;
They soon find out it isn't worth their while to try at all.
My spikes are long
And very strong,
To save me if I fall.

When winter comes, I curl up tight and sleep the cold away.
Till spring is here I never stir, but in my hole I stay;
Curled up asleep,
Quite warm I keep,
And cosy. Now, Good-day!

EVA M. HAINES.

'PON HONOUR.

'IT'S all our own silly fault, too.'

'Yes.' After that there seemed nothing more to be said, and silence fell upon the two boys, staring moodily at the blazing sunshine and the sparkling river.

'Hallo! you two at home?' a voice hailed them from the other side of the river. 'I thought you were out.'

'Got into a row, and had to stay at home,' answered one of the boys briefly.

'Hard luck! Well, what's to prevent your coming down to Low Water with me? Bring your lunch and——'

'Sorry, Joe, but we can't.'

'Why not?'

'Father put us on our honour not to go off the place.'

'Well, who's to know if you do? There's no one here but yourselves. Don't be such softies.'

'Sorry, but we can't.'

'Well, you are the limit! It's going to be awfully hot too. Come on, you're not in earnest; it'll be ripping down by the lake.'

He waited a moment, but neither boy moved, and with a snort of contempt he tramped away. Apparently Joe Diggen didn't know what being on their honour meant. Silence fell again when the sound of his steps had died away, broken at last by a profound sigh from Phil.

'After all,' he said, 'no one would know if we went. I'm not thinking of going,' he added hastily, as his brother turned a stern eye upon him, 'but no one would know if we did.'

'We should,' answered Geoff shortly.

'M'yes, of course,' assented Phil.

What a long day that was; a tour round the premises only served to plunge them in deeper gloom. There was not a soul on the place but themselves and a few hens. All the farm hands were in the distant fields harvesting, the women servants had gone to a neighbouring fair, and Mr. Trevant himself had motored to Aberville, to fetch their small cousin Leila, who was coming from the North by herself to spend a year with them. The boys were to have gone too, but a specially naughty prank had decided otherwise.

Tea-time came at last, and the boys carried their tea down to the river and ate it in the little summer-house there; it did not seem quite so lonely with the water sparkling and chattering at their feet.

'Hallo!' said Geoff suddenly, 'there's a boat!'

'Where? So there is; who's in it? Why, it's a kid!'

'Look! she is drifting! Does she know about the rapids, I wonder?'

'She's too small to row if she did,' said Paul, running to the water's edge.

'Hallo! look at that!' cried Geoff, for the child, a pretty little girl with long fair hair, leaned over the edge of the boat to gather a water-lily just out of reach. The boat tipped and tipped until, as she grasped the flower with a triumphant cry, over it went, throwing its small burden into the shining water.

It only took Geoff a second to kick off his shoes and coat, while Phil stood white-faced and agonised on the bank.

'What shall I do? What shall I do, Geoff?' he kept saying.

'Why, cut round to the stable and get Father's little runabout car and fetch Dr. Hill, while I get her out.' The next moment he was in the river.

With knees that shook Phil ran to the stable. He just managed to keep his head enough to remember how to work the car, which he had often driven with his father beside him. He succeeded in getting out of the gate without mishap, and was soon speeding along the level road. It was fortunately not far to the house, and Dr. Hill himself was just coming out of the gate. The boy did not take long telling him what had happened and, though his words were all mixed up, the doctor seemed to understand.

'All right,' he said, 'I'll come right along,' and took the wheel while Phil sat beside him, the tears running down his cheeks.

'Scared?' asked the doctor as they started.

'Suppose Geoff's drowned!' sobbed the boy.

'Nonsense, he has as many lives as a cat; he will be all right.' Nevertheless that little car whizzed home, and the Doctor did not stop to put it in the stable, but made at once for the river.

'He's out, thank God! Plucky fellow,' he muttered as he ran.

Yes, they were both out, Geoff trying hard to restore consciousness to the little figure, who lay so white and wet on the grass.

Under the Doctor's skilful hands she soon began to breathe again, and then he carried her indoors.

'Now, Geoff, I'm going to put her in your bed. So you slip into your brother's room and change into dry things, and Phil can pop down to the kitchen and heat some milk. That's right, cheer up; you see Geoff's all right.'

Phil departed hastily as his brother turned to look at him, and when presently he brought the milk upstairs (in the saucepan, to keep it hot) he found the new-comer sitting up in bed, while the doctor was clumsily trying to dry her long hair with a towel.

'Phil, this is Leila!' announced Geoff, and Phil nearly dropped the saucepan in his astonishment. 'She got into the wrong train, came to Dornford, and tried to walk here.'

'Yes,' chimed in the little girl, 'and then I saw the river and a boat, and I just got in and came along because it was so dusty on the road. And I thought it was a fairy boat, and I would get to Fairyland.'

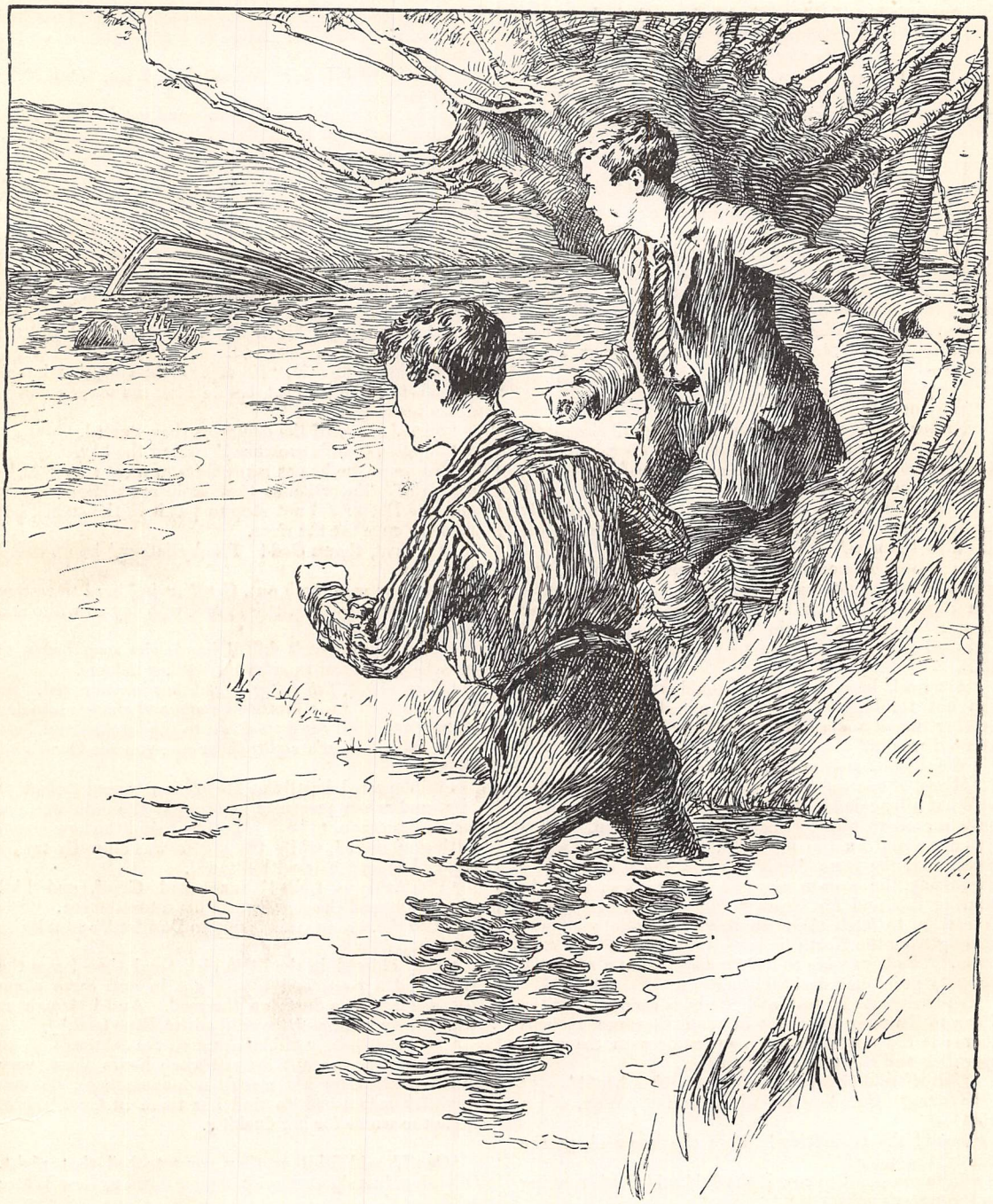
'You very nearly did,' murmured the doctor.

When Mr. Trevant arrived some hours later, very much puzzled by his niece's non-appearance, he was mightily astonished to find her there in Geoff's bed, little the worse for her ducking.

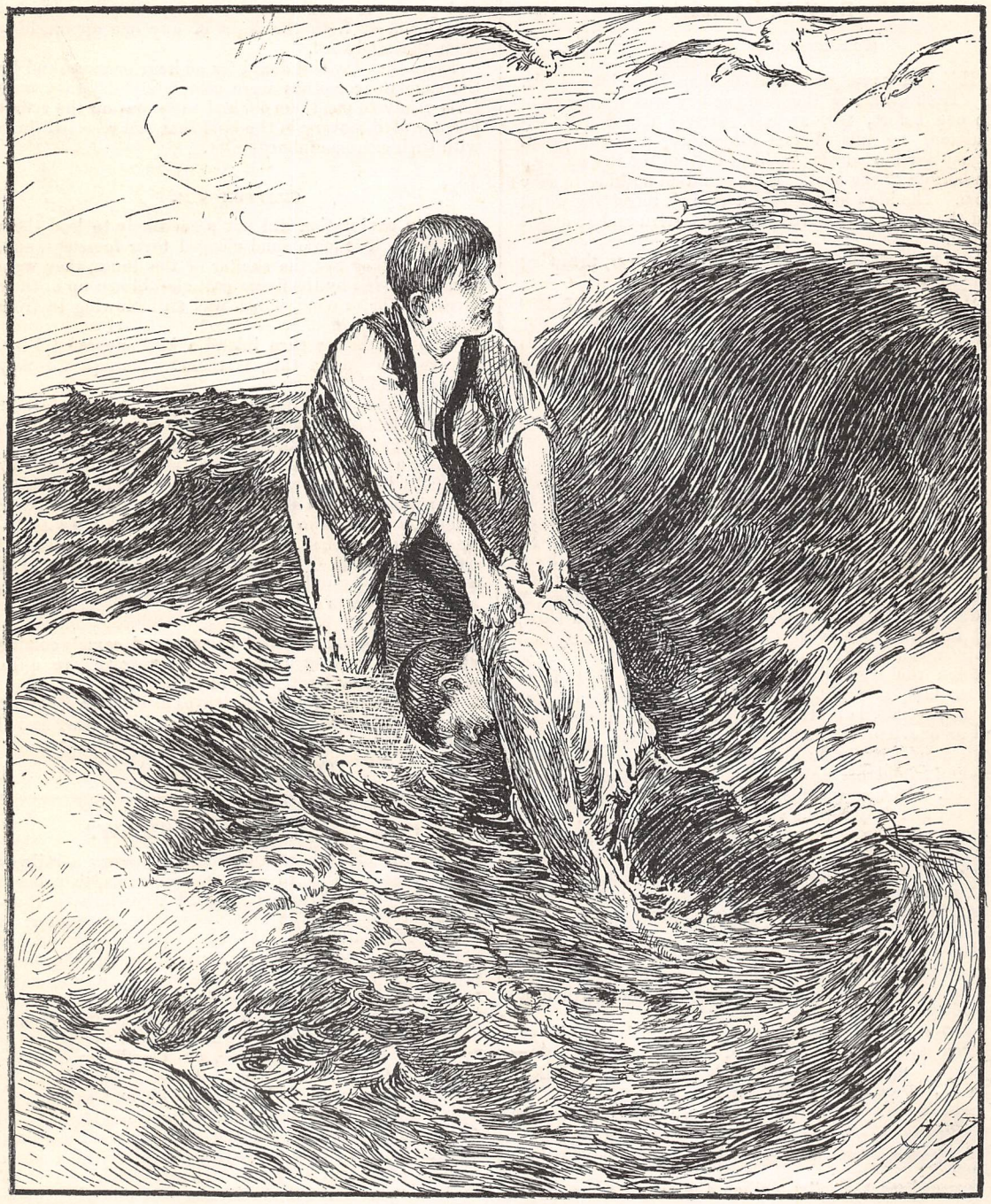
'Geoff,' said Phil as they went to bed that night. 'S'posing, just s'posing, we had gone down to Low Water with Joe?'

'If we had,' answered his brother, pulling off his stockings, 'Leila would have been drowned, 'cos there wasn't a soul nearer than the doctor's.'

'No,' agreed Phil soberly, 'there wasn't.'



"The next moment he was in the river."



"He dragged the younger boy into safety."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 122.)

THE end came sooner even than Dick looked for. Each stroke of the younger boy was feebler than the one before, till, at last, utterly dazed with exhaustion, he missed one altogether, and the great, clumsy oar hurled him backwards from the thwart into the bottom of the boat. Dick could do nothing to save them. The high bow buried itself in a retreating wave, and the one that followed lifted the stern and swung it round.

In a moment the boat filled and rolled over, throwing the two boys into the boiling welter of surf.

What happened during the next minute or two neither of them could even describe to himself afterwards. Dick clung grimly and tenaciously to his oar, but it was twisted from his grasp in a moment. He knew literally nothing more until he was hurled, breathless and battered, on to a heap of soft sand. It shelved inward, and as the wave left him he rolled down clear of the one that followed.

He was saved himself, so much his mind grasped, but so conscious was he of his younger brother's danger that he was on his feet in an instant, and scrambling and stumbling over the soft sand down to the water's edge.

Just as he reached it what looked like a black heap of drenched clothing was being sucked back by the undertow. For a moment the water left it exposed, and seemed to gather itself together for a fresh blow, but in that moment Dick seized the object firmly and dragged it a few feet up the beach.

Then the returning wave knocked his feet from under him, and he fell, gasping and struggling for breath, across his brother's limp and lifeless body.

For one moment he felt that they floated back, but with a great effort he managed to dig his toes into the sand and held his ground, just for the second that was needed. As the water left them again he scrambled to his feet and dragged the younger boy into safety.

Sandy was quite unconscious, but he still breathed: that Dick discovered after a few moments of hopeless anxiety. Once satisfied in this respect, the elder boy lost no time in dragging off the other's drenched clothes and in setting to work to chafe the circulation back to his lifeless limbs.

The hot sun and the warmth of the soft dry sand helped him immeasurably, and he soon had the joy of seeing his brother's eyes open, and then his mouth in a terrific yawn.

'O-o-ow! Where are we? In the Bible place? I thought—I thought we were drowned. . .' Sandy struggled upright, and promptly collapsed. 'I feel sick . . .' he remarked disgustedly.

'That's the sea-water—and because you very nearly *were* drowned,' Dick assured him. 'You'll be all right in a minute. Just lie still, while I get off my wet things.'

Satisfied that Sandy was on the way to recovery, Dick stripped off his soaking clothes, and, spreading them to dry, he luxuriated in the warmth of the fine, soft sand.

They were lying in a deep hollow between two dunes, and the one over which Dick had rolled shut out their view of the sea. The other, which was high and steep, and partly covered with dry and prickly shrubs, hid them securely from the sight of any one approaching from the landward.

There they lay and dozed for an hour or more, and by the time their clothes were completely dry they were fully ready to put them on, and to set out on their first journey of discovery in the land that had received them with such extreme inhospitality.

CHAPTER VIII.

Their exploration did not seem likely to lead them far afield. The loose sand clogged their footsteps, and, as soon as they lost the shelter of the dunes, they were almost blinded by the flying particles, blown up in their faces by a brisk wind, which was still blowing in from the sea.

'We had better turn inland a bit,' suggested Dick. 'There's no fun in this, is there? Perhaps we may strike a road.'

'Sure to,' returned Sandy, cheerfully. 'It was further inland, I believe, that we saw those camels. Anyway, we shall have the wind behind us that way.'

After a bit they came upon a tract that was thickly clothed with clumps of brushwood, and here they made better progress than on the drifting sand of the beach. Suddenly Dick, who was a little ahead, signed to his brother to stop, and, at the same moment, he dropped on to his hands and knees and crawled to the shelter of a thick bush. Sandy followed his example obediently, and joined him in his lair.

'What's up?' he asked.

'There's a whole crowd of men and camels coming along,' Dick answered, in a whisper. 'They're quite close; it's lucky I saw them in time.'

Sandy peered through the leaves cautiously. 'What horrible-looking men!' he whispered, in a rather scared voice. 'Why, they're savages!'

(*Continued on page* 143.)

A 'WATER BRADSHAW.'

WE all know how useful and necessary a railway time-table is to any one who has to make a journey by rail. There is, in ordinary times, a time-table for every public railway line, however short or unimportant the line may be. In this table all the stations are named in their proper order, and the names are arranged in the form of a column. The train starts from the station at the top of the column, and passes all the others in succession. Wherever the train stops at a station figures, representing the hour and the minute at which it ought to be there, are placed opposite the name of the station. These figures form a column, just as the names of the stations do, and the column shows the progress of one train. The times for a second train will be entered in the same way in a second column, and so on for every train, each of which has a column of figures to itself. The traveller, therefore, by looking at this time-table, can find out when every train starts, and discover at which stations it stops, and at what time it does so; and with this help he can select whichever train best suits his convenience.

A number of these time-tables are usually arranged

on one large sheet, and posted up in the stations. In such a case all the time-tables on the sheet relate to the different lines in one district, and, by comparing the tables, a traveller may see how he can best change from one line to another, and how long he will have to wait at the station where he makes the change before he can continue his journey in another train and on another line.

In addition to these sheet or poster time-tables in the stations, there are time-tables made up in the form of books which travellers may carry with them. Some of these contain the time-tables for a large district, such as a county, while others, usually called railway guides, contain the time-tables for the whole kingdom. The most famous of the guides is *Bradshaw's*, which contains several hundreds of tables. In the early days of the railways *Bradshaw's Guide* was a very small book; but it has grown as the railways have multiplied and extended, and it is now a couple of inches thick. It has an index of all the stations, and contains several maps so that any place can be quickly found. Indeed, without these helps, the *Guide* would be almost too bewildering for use.

Bradshaw's Guide deals only with passenger trains. The railway companies have, however, time-tables for their goods trains. There are guides, too, which give information about the goods yards all over the country, and tell what platforms, sheds, cranes, and other accommodation each of them has—information which is often very useful to those who have heavy or perishable goods to send to places which they have never seen.

In bygone days there were road-books, which served almost the same purposes as time-tables, for the coaches driven on the roads. A most curious book was one which has been called a *Water Bradshaw*, because it dealt with rivers and canals. This book was written by a gentleman named Zachary Allnutt, and was first published in the year 1810. Allnutt was the superintendent of the Thames Navigation, or, in other words, he was the manager for the committee of gentlemen who had charge of the Thames and of its weirs, locks, and towing-paths. These gentlemen, or Commissioners as they were called, were empowered by Act of Parliament to collect tolls from the barges and other boats which passed up and down the river, and to spend the money in making weirs, locks, towing-paths, and similar improvements, which would help the navigation of the river. From Sheerness to Thames Stone, near Staines, the Corporation of London had charge of the river; while from Thames Stone upwards, as far as Lechlade, in Gloucestershire, a distance of one hundred and nine miles, the Commissioners had charge.

Zachary Allnutt, as a dutiful servant to his employers, wished to persuade as many traders as possible to send their goods up and down the river, and for that purpose he issued this little book of information useful to traders. He lived at Henley, and the book was printed there. The one which I possess is a thin paper-backed book of twenty pages, but it is interleaved with blank pages, which make it thicker than it otherwise would be. It was published originally at three shillings and sixpence, a large price for so small a book.

The title of Allnutt's book is *Useful and Correct Accounts of the Navigation of the Rivers and Canals West of London.* His object is two-fold—firstly, to show how goods could be sent up the Thames and along different tributaries and canals to various places; and, secondly, to persuade traders to send their wares by water instead of by road. He tells how far the various places are, what the charges are by water and by road, how long the journeys take, and so forth. He also gives little histories of the canals, which are often very interesting.

The distance from London to Henley by water was sixty-nine miles, he tells us; the carriage of goods by water cost nine shillings for every ton, while by road the cost was thirty shillings per ton. From London to Lechlade the distance was one hundred and forty-six miles, the water carriage twenty-eight shillings per ton, the land carriage eighty shillings. This water carriage was the boatmen's charges for carrying the goods only; but in addition there were charges or tolls at every lock, which were taken by the Commissioners for the improvement of the navigation, as already explained. These tolls were threepence per ton at every lock, and amounted to six shillings and ninepence for all the locks between London and Lechlade. These expenses work out altogether to a cost of just under threepence per ton per mile, which Allnutt thought to be very cheap, though it is much greater than modern railway charges. The Thames barges travelled from twenty to thirty miles a day when going upstream and against the current; but when going downstream they usually went about five miles further in the day.

Allnutt deals in the same careful way with the rivers Wey, Kennet, Avon (at Bristol), and Severn, and with the Basingstoke, Wiltshire and Berkshire, Kennet and Avon, Thames and Severn, and other canals. An interesting part of the little book tells us the way by water from one place to another. Thus the way from Bristol to Birmingham was up the River Avon to Bath, along the Kennet and Avon Canal to Semington, where the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal commenced. This canal led to Abingdon on the Thames, which is eight miles below Oxford. From Oxford a canal led northward to Napton in Warwickshire, where it joined a canal to Warwick. From Warwick there was a canal to Birmingham. This was, perhaps, the shortest route at this time from Bristol to Birmingham by canal, and the distance was one hundred and seventy-six miles. There were other routes, and some of the later ones, which went up the Severn, were considerably shorter. If we compare this canal route through Oxford with the modern railway route through Worcester and Cheltenham we shall see how much more direct, and therefore shorter and quicker, the railway is than the canals.

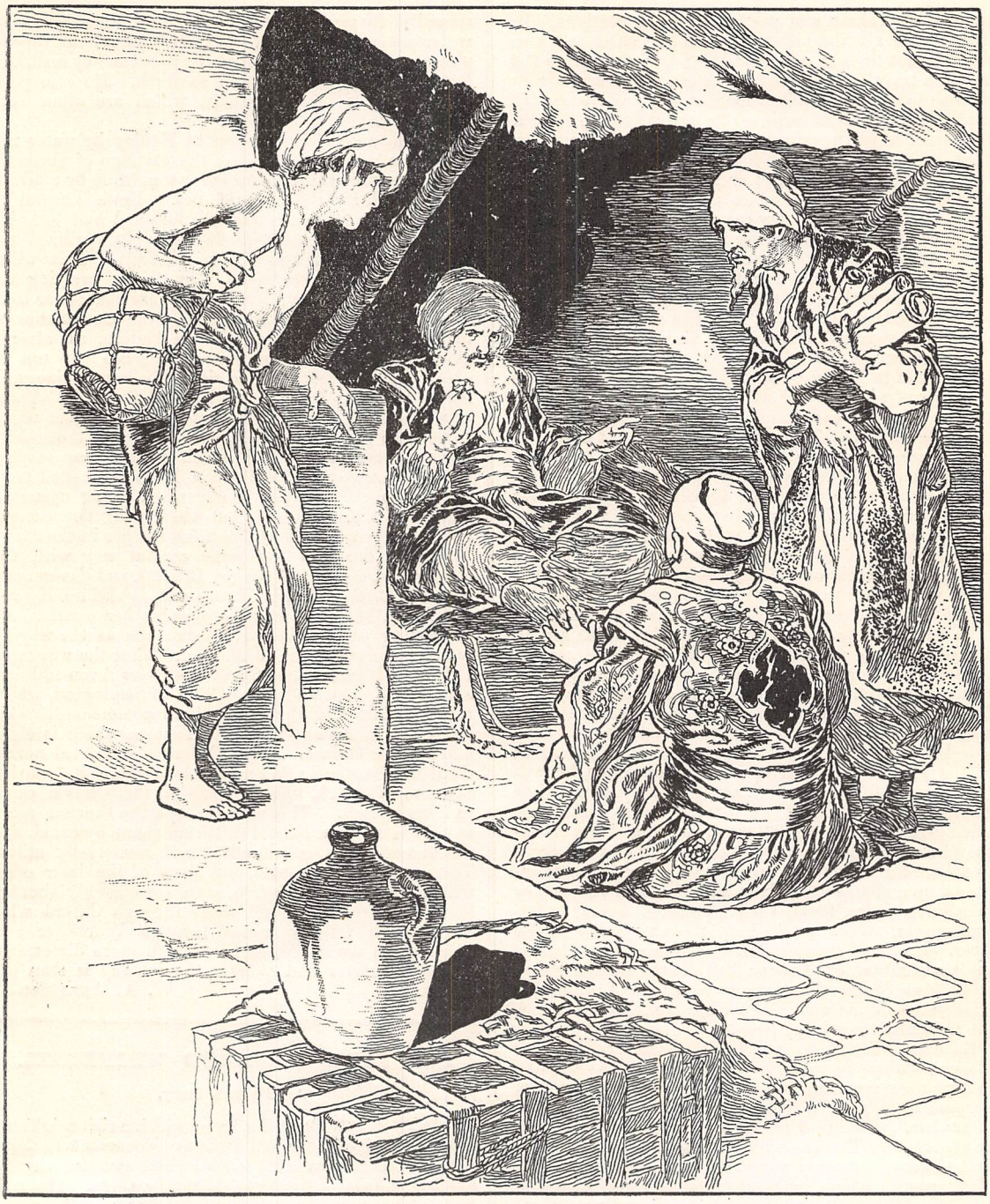
W. A. Atkinson.

THE FIVE HUNDRED WITNESSES.

An Eastern Story.

A POOR man claimed a house which a rich neighbour had seized. He had deeds and documents to show, but his more powerful enemy had got together a number of false witnesses to disprove them. The rich man also presented the Cadi with a bag containing five hundred ducats.

When the time came for the hearing of the case, the poor man told his story, and produced his writings, but unfortunately he had no witnesses. The other, who had plenty—of a sort—urged the Cadi to decide in his favour.



"The judge drew from under his seat the bag of ducats."

After letting him talk for some time, the Judge at last calmly drew from under his seat the bag of five hundred ducats with which the rich man had tried to bribe him.

'You have been much mistaken in this suit,' said the Cadi, 'for if your poor neighbour could bring no witnesses, I myself can produce at least five hundred in his favour.'

So saying, the Cadi contemptuously threw the bag at the rich man; he then assigned the house to its rightful owner.

E. Dyke.

"Dave succeeded in towing the almost senseless boy on to a strip of ground."

HOW BILLY SLIVVINS BECAME A BOY SCOUT.

NOT one of the inhabitants of Little Puddleton had the slightest doubt that Billy Slivvins was far and away the very worst boy in the village, for though but thirteen years of age he had already gained an unpleasant fame for robbing orchards, breaking people's windows, and every other form of wanton mischief that chanced to come ready to his hand.

This terrible fellow was a sturdy, bullet-headed youngster with a pair of twinkling hazel eyes, and

in spite of the long and ever-growing list of his wrong-doings, more than one summer visitor had declared his belief that 'there was the makings of a man in that young rascal,' and that, given a little discipline, he would yet turn out a lad of both spirit and determination. But unfortunately the idea of 'discipline' was associated in Billy's mind with having to obey the orders of some much more masterful a personage than his own rheumatic old grandmother, and when a visitor suggested in a half-chaffing manner to Billy that he ought to enrol himself in the local Boy Scouts Corps, that youngster expressed the opinion that 'there was nothing in them but a lot of showing off,' and that 'when he could see them *do* anything, why then perhaps he might set to work and see about "joining up."' And although Mr. Bremer gave many instances of extremely plucky deeds performed that very year in different parts of the kingdom by Boy Scouts, Billy—although he listened eagerly to the anecdotes—only answered that whatever daring deeds those other Scouts had done, none of *their* lot had so far done anything bolder than climb trees and blow bugles.

In fact, the memory of Mr. Bremer's stirring stories so increased his contempt for the local Corps that it eventually led him to the act of open warfare that resulted—as you will presently see—in a sudden and lasting change in all his habits and opinions.

'Jolly hot to-day, and no mistake about it,' said Gerald Dare, the doctor's son, as he crouched along the huge limb of an ancient pollard overhanging the zig-zag backwater that runs from Puddleton Mill to join the main river some mile or so lower down, 'why, I've taken cover right on top of a wasps' nest! Get *out*, you wretched little beast!' And striiking at a particularly vicious insect with his khaki wide-awake he flicked the unhappy wasp into the deep and rapid stream below, where it was promptly swallowed by a large and hungry chub. 'That's one good deed, anyhow,' he laughed, 'really it ought to count as two—if preventing some one from getting stung and providing that fish with a nice free lunch doesn't make two good——hullo! whatever on earth *was* that?' for as he spoke, something struck with a sounding 'smack!' on a large bough a few inches above his head, and, peering through the foliage, Gerald saw our friend Billy Slivvins performing a wild war-dance on the summit of the opposite bank, and evidently just preparing to 'let fly' a second and very much larger ball of stiff yellow clay. 'Hi tlfere, youngster! stop chucking that stuff over this side,' cried the indignant Scout; 'if you shy any more, I'll jolly quick come across and give you a lesson in manners, so cut off home and leave people who aren't interfering with you alone.'

'Righto!—let's see you come across and *send* me home then,' was the aggravating reply. But as he stepped forward to aim another clay ball at Gerald, a great lump of turf gave way with a sudden rush just beneath his feet, and with a cry of terror, Billy Slivvins vanished—heels in air—into some fifteen feet of water.

This unlooked-for disappearance of his enemy was so startling that for some seconds Gerald remained staring at the muddy yellow eddies marking the spot where the treacherous ledge had collapsed; then swinging himself to the ground he raced at top speed along the bank, and, without a moment's hesitation, took a flying leap into the water just as Billy's head appeared for the second time above the surface of the deep and rapid stream. Very fortunately a swift back-current swept the drowning lad directly into the course of the brave young swimmer, and seizing him by the collar, Dare succeeded after a hard struggle in towing the almost senseless boy on to a shallow strip of ground which here jutted far out into the river.

As he paused to recover his breath, Gerald heard from close at hand the shrill note of a bugle, and following on the sound appeared Tom Vernon and two fellow Scouts, racing like three hares across from the high road. The newly-arrived friends quickly took the situation in and rushing helter-skelter into the stream, within a few moments brought both Dare and his charge safely to dry land. Then Vernon and one of the other Scouts set to work—heedless of their dripping clothing—to render 'first aid' to the hapless Billy Slivvins, whilst their companion started off as hard as he could run to Little Puddleton, to bring Dr. Dare to the scene of the accident.

'How did it happen, Gerald?' asked Vernon, who was busily engaged working Billy's arms up and down. 'I suppose the young beggar was at some of his usual tricks——hullo! he's coming round again—be careful not to let him slip, Fred.'

'Oh, *he* was all right enough,' replied Gerald; 'the bank gave way with him, and, of course, I couldn't stand still and watch another fellow drown. All the same, it was a good thing he got into that b ck-current, for when I caught him by the collar I was very nearly quite done up.'

'Well, however he came by his ducking, he won't be likely to forget it in a hurry,' remarked Fred Browne; 'all I can say is that if he really wasn't playing some ——hullo! there goes a motor horn! Vane must have met the doctor coming back from one of his rounds. Have a look if you can see them coming along.'

'Yes, here comes the pater; they're just bringing the car through the big gate,' cried Gerald; and a few minutes later Dr. Dare and the messenger came hurrying up and joined the group of boys.

'He will do all right,' said the doctor, after a short examination of the patient; 'into the car with him as quickly as you can—I will hear the whole story of how it happened afterwards—we must get him between the blankets at Cox's farm over yonder,' and Billy being comfortably stowed in the motor, the car went swishing and bumping across the meadow towards the high-road, whilst the Scouts made off at top speed for home and dry clothing.

'Hullo, Billy, here come some of those Boy Scouts,' cried Ted Pottle some three weeks later, as he met our hero issuing from his grandmother's quaint little creeper-clad cottage; 'let's get hidden behind Radford's pig-styes and pelt them with a few of these old windfall apples—it *will* be a rare bit of fun.'

'Nothing of that sort of fun for me, Ted Pottle,' was the quick and unexpected reply; 'and what's more, if you throw any yourself I'll see about giving you a licking, so just you drop the notion before you get into trouble.'

'Oh, all right!' grumbled Ted, letting the apples fall to the ground and moving away in great surprise; 'it isn't worth fighting about, but if you've turned so wonderfully fond of Boy Scouts I only wonder you

don't cut right straight off and become a Boy Scout your own self.'

And, though you may scarcely believe it, that is just exactly what our hero—a month or two later—made up his mind to do; and now Billy Slivvins is one of the very smartest Scouts in the whole of the local Corps.

IN THE DARK.

By Harold Bindloss.

THE sun had set when Tom Dawson left the little settlement and set out for the Winthrop ranch. It was hot, and, having a sack of groceries to carry, he sat down near a balsam trunk that spanned a ravine. The Canadian settlers often use a tree for a bridge. One needed a steady head to cross; but Tom was young, hard work on the ranch had strengthened him, and he thought his nerve was good. He admitted that he did not like to be alone in the bush after dark, but this was why he sat down, instead of hurrying on.

The great black pines got indistinct, the distant clash of cow-bells died away, and the quietness somehow got daunting. Tom moralised about it as he gazed into the gathering gloom. Nobody lived between the settlement and the Winthrop homestead, which was some distance off. The grey timber wolf and the American panther lurked in the bush, but they seldom attacked you if you left them alone; besides, Tom had killed a panther with his axe. He saw that in this untamed country a man must do what was required of him, however hard it was. 'One must make good,' as the Canadians said, and two things were obviously needed: strength and nerve. The first was not so difficult (one could train one's body), but the other was not so easily acquired. When one came to think of it, want of courage was at the bottom of every failure and shabbiness. On the whole, Tom was glad he had not gone for the groceries in the morning, as he had wanted.

Then, although he did not actually hear anything, he turned his head and saw a grey object at the other end of the log. It looked as big as a mastiff, but was gaunt and lean, and stood motionless, watching him. He kept still, to see what it would do. The wolf came a little nearer and then, with a movement he could hardly follow, melted into the gloom. It came back, hesitated, and running across, passed him within a few yards and vanished in the bush. It went so quietly that he could hardly believe it was real. Tom got up and shouldered his pack. He could not have hurt the animal if he had wanted. That was the worst of being afraid: one bothered oneself about dangers that didn't exist.

All the same, he was glad to reach the main trail, which he had left for the sake of a short cut. It was just wide enough for a jumper sledge, and ran, like a dark tunnel, through thick forest. There was a faint humming in the pine-tops, and one could hear the river, but that was all. Yet the wild creatures made no noise; savage eyes might be watching from the undergrowth, and Tom wished the meat-cans in his pack would not jingle. For an hour he heard nothing suspicious, though he had a curious feeling that he was followed. He set his lips as he struggled with it, and walked on steadily; he was not going to run!

Then a bush rustled, and he dropped the groceries. It cost him an effort to stop and pick them up, but he did so. There was nothing one need be afraid of, but he began to run, with the meat-cans banging on his back. The strange thing was that the faster he ran the more afraid he got: he had known there was no danger while he walked. He stopped a moment when the lights of the homestead shone across the clearing, but when he entered the wooden kitchen he was breathing hard and his face was damp with sweat.

Jake Winthrop, who was a wiry, well-grown lad, looked hard at him. 'Well,' he remarked, 'you've got them now all right!'

'Got what?' Tom asked, with a flush.

Jake grinned. 'Call them what you like. You came home at a racing clip. Why was that?'

'If you want to know, I thought something was following me.'

'I *do* know,' Jake rejoined. 'So does Pete! He once broke the record from the settlement. *Said* a panther had got after him.'

Pete, who owned a ranch in the neighbourhood, smiled, but Mr. Winthrop raised his hand.

'You talk too much, my lad,' he said, and turned to Tom. 'Well, I believe a panther sometimes will follow a man in the dark. That's curious, because the panther could easily overtake him, if it wanted. However, I've known good bushmen who had a half-superstitious fear of some animal. Perhaps the best cure is to face the trouble boldly at the beginning, but it isn't easy.'

'We all know Steve Deacon,' Jake broke in. 'He's sure scared of timber wolves.'

'He has some grounds,' said Mr. Winthrop dryly. 'Still, I think it would be bad for any wolves that really got after Steve.'

To Tom's relief they let the matter drop, and it was not brought up again for some weeks. The boys were paddling home from a fishing trip one evening with a friend from another ranch when the howl of a wolf came out of the misty forest that rolled down to the lake. Another wolf answered farther along the shore, and Jake imitated the wild cry.

'How's that, Dave?' he asked their companion.

'Pretty good, but you haven't got it quite right. Now you listen to me.'

Tom started as a howl ran across the lake. It was wonderfully like a wolf, but there was silence afterwards.

'Better than mine,' Jake admitted. 'Good enough to cheat a *man*, but the wolves know the difference. They're pesky cunning brutes. How d'you learn to do it?'

'Practice,' Dave said modestly. 'When we lived in North Manitoba I could call a moose. You make a little bark trumpet, and lie up at sundown where you can get the moose between you and some water. He thinks it's his mate. Takes time, of course, to get the thing right.'

'But is it a *call*?' Tom asked.

'Sure. The big, wild things don't go ramping through the bush, making a noise for fun. They're quiet as quiet, but when you do hear them it's their talk. *Means* something: "Watch out," or "I've struck a patch of good feed." If they're wolves, it means they've scented a deer.'

'Well, I think your wolf-call would deceive a man.'

'Let's try,' said Dave, with a chuckle, indicating a twinkling light across the lake. 'That's Steve Deacon's fire; he's splitting cedar shingles for his roof, and doesn't like timber wolves. Say, it would be a joke if we scared him off his camp!'

(*Continued on page* 138.)

"He saw a grey object at the other end of the log."

"'Pretty good shooting; good enough for me, anyhow!'"

IN THE DARK.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Continued from page* 135.)

THE others agreed, though Tom felt that, if Steve really was afraid of wolves, it was rather a shabby trick; but he felt a keen curiosity to see what the man would do. A half-moon had risen above the pines when they landed, and stole as quietly as possible through the bush, though quietness was difficult. One had to crawl over big fallen branches and through thickets, and Tom tore his jacket among some blackberry vines.

At length they reached marshy ground, clear of large trees. Jake left them, but Dave and Tom went on until they came to a clump of short willows. The soil was wet, but rocks broke through it here and there, and a belt of swamp grass ran between them and the ridge on which Steve had pitched his camp. The red glow of a fire flickered among the cedar trunks, and now and then lighted up his tent. Everything was quiet. It looked as if Steve had gone to sleep, and as Tom crouched in the mud he began to wonder whether the joke was worth the trouble. He had scratched his face, his clothes were much the worse, and he felt the cold slime soaking through his boots.

Then Dave put his hands to his mouth, and a wolf's howl rang out. An answering howl came from the forest, across the swamp; some distance off at first, and then nearer. The thing was cleverly done; one could imagine three or four wolves were prowling round the camp.

A dark figure appeared against the tent, and the fire blazed up. Steve was throwing on fresh wood. It looked as if he had been deceived, and Tom wondered how he felt. Then his figure vanished: it did not move away, but melted into the gloom. After a few moments Dave howled again, and Tom's curiosity about what Steve would do was satisfied.

A thin red flash leapt out near the tent, a report echoed along the edge of the woods, and something hummed through the willows like an angry bee. It passed very close, and Tom dropped on his hands and knees. The joke now struck him as very poor indeed. The rifle flashed again; a severed willow branch fell a yard off, and he heard a sharp flick against a stone.

'Get behind there!' Dave said, pushing him.

Tom lay in the mud behind the stone, for the rifle-shots continued like somebody cracking a big whip, and the Winchester bullets came thick and fast, but not at random; Steve was methodically searching the willows, and if it had not been for the stone—Tom did not want to think of that, but wondered, very anxiously, how many cartridges the magazine held. At length the shooting stopped, and Dave touched him.

'Hustle!' he said hoarsely. 'We've got to quit before he loads her up.'

They crawled back into the forest, and Tom hoped Steve would not hear the noise they made, because there was no time to pick one's way. The main thing was to get under cover before the fellow recharged his magazine. They reached the canoe, breathless, scratched, and muddy, and after they launched her Dave took off his hat and indicated a hole in the brim.

'Pretty good shooting; good enough for me, anyhow! I made him think it was a wolf all right.'

'You certainly did,' Jake replied with some dryness. 'Still, the stunt wasn't as amusing as we thought—not the kind of thing you want to tell the boys about. On the whole, I reckon Steve has put the laugh on *us*.'

They agreed that it would be better to keep this adventure dark, but soon afterwards Tom met Steve Deacon, who came to split fence rails for Mr. Winthrop. Tom got to like the big, quiet bushman, and one day when they were at work together tactfully persuaded him to talk about the wolves.

'I sure don't like them,' Steve confessed. 'Timber wolves are poison mean. Never trail a man in this country, *they say!* Well, I take no chances after that night.'

He paused, and his brown face was very stern when he resumed: 'It was in the small pine scrub where Ontario runs up to Hudson's Bay. We were making south for the settlements, with the snow on the ground, when a runner came off a handsled 'bout a mile from the place where we meant to camp. Well, we left B'tise, my French-Canadian partner, to fix it, and went on. When the fire was lit and supper cooked he didn't come. Night wasn't dark, he was a smart bushman—but he never came at all.'

'Wolves?' Tom suggested, in a rather strained voice.

'Wolves,' said Steve, with grim quietness. 'We went back when we heard them, but they'd got him first. Poison mean brutes that only dare get after a man who's alone! B'tise had put up some fight; we found two with skulls split and one cut in half. Well, he was a white man and my partner—it's not a thing you want to talk about.'

Tom said nothing. He could imagine the scene; the lonely man making his last fight with the terrible axe. But it was better not to think about things like this, particularly when one was in the bush after dark. He met Steve now and then after the fence was finished, and one day, when the snow was on the ground, they went hunting.

(*Continued on page* 162.)

QUAINT LOCAL SURVIVALS.

CERTAIN towns and villages in our Isles still observe customs that have come down from remote antiquity, the origin in many cases being lost in oblivion, in others it can be traced to frankly pagan sources. Thus, at the little fishing village of Abbotsbury, Dorset, Old May Day is known as 'Garland Day,' because several wreaths, each representing the company of a fishing-boat, parade the streets, accompanied by children in holiday dress, who collect pennies. A tea is afterwards held on the beach. Antiquarians say the custom is the survival of a festival held in honour of Neptune.

Doubtless, 'Kingsteignton Lukes,' or 'The Festival of the Ram,' had also a pagan origin. In this pretty Devonshire village, a mile from Newton Abbot, a ram, or lamb, is sacrificed at Whitsuntide, usually on the Monday of that week. A stream known as 'The Fair Water' bubbles up from the neighbourhood of a stone quarry near by, and flows through the village. The story goes that in the remote past Kingsteignton had no water, so the people went to consult a wise woman, or white witch—such ladies were very plentiful in the West Country, if old tales are true! She promised them a plentiful supply of excellent water if they would yearly sacrifice a lamb to her, which they readily agreed to do, and 'The Fair Water' burst up in a meadow at Springhead, and ran in a pure clear stream through the village to join the Teign. The Kingsteignton folks, it

is said, have never failed to keep their word, and the 'Fair Water' has never failed to flow copiously. Every Whitsuntide the lamb is roasted whole, either in the bed of the stream or in the neighbouring fields, and crowds are attracted to 'Kingsteignton Lukes, as the great feast is locally called. The evening before, the women of the village draw water in every available vessel, before the stream is turned off at Springhead, and allowed to run dry, so that the lamb may be roasted in the bed. The animal, generally the present of some neighbouring farmer, is placed in a waggon on the morning of the feast, the vehicle being decked with flowers, boughs, and flags, and is driven in procession through the village and the adjoining parishes—the ceremony is known as 'The Procession of the Ram.' It is then brought back, killed, and cooked. As a rule, some entertainment takes place in the village in connection with the feast, and one rector invariably had a service on this day (I am not sure if this custom is still observed). After the festival the 'Fair Water' is allowed to flow back to the old channel, and runs sparkling through the village till next Whitsuntide comes round.

Somewhat similar is the famous 'Puck Fair,' held in the little Kerry town of Kilorglin on the 11th of August, when a 'Puck,' or 'He-goat,' rules over the fair, which lasts for three days, known locally as 'Gathering Day,' 'Fair Day,' and 'Scattering Day.' Needless to say, mountainous Kerry is a land of goats; but the origin of this curious custom is quite uncertain. For some time before the important date, the youths of the town have had their eyes on some specially fine specimen of a 'puck,' and on the day, a few days before the fair, they go up the mountains, and select the finest animal they can find. This beast is often set aside long before, and receives extra food and care; but the choice is supposed to be a great secret. He is brought triumphantly down to Kilorglin, and on the night of the 10th of August, 'Gathering Day,' he is adorned with green ribbons, and placed on a stand or pedestal erected for the purpose in the main street or on the fair green. Here he is tied securely, and given a plentiful supply of the best food available, and for three days he can look with disdain from his lofty stand over the crowds assembled at the 'Fair of Puck,' among whom are huge numbers of tinkers, those strange and most disorderly creatures, who take the place of the gipsies in Ireland, where the true Romany has never established himself, though a few caravans laden with baskets come every summer to the Green Isle, and a number of Welsh gipsies attend the more important horse-fairs. The tinkers have all the vices of the gipsies and none of their virtues, and it cannot be said that their presence lends a charm to the fair, although their many fires kindled in the vicinity of the town, round which they sleep without tent or caravan to protect them, are undoubtedly picturesque when darkness falls.

On the 12th of August the Scattering begins. Puck is taken down from his exalted position and chaired through the town, looking thoroughly weary of his high estate. Next he has to undergo a 'Coronation,' while the people cheer wildly. Then Puck is released, much to his delight apparently, for he usually capers and gambols excitedly, sometimes butting at any one who comes near him. Perhaps he had learnt by sad experience that a sudden elevation to a high estate brings trouble and restrictions with it.

'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.'

After this the 'fun o' the fair' is over. Puck and the tinkers, the cattle-dealers and the Aunt-Sally-men, the hucksters and the thimble-riggers vanish for a twelvemonth.

Bonfires still blaze among the Kerry hills at Midsummer, and the country folks gather round them in the brief dusk of the 'Night of St. John,' the boys and girls dance to the 'ring of the piper's tune,' and the old folks chatting and smoking round the cheery blaze, and telling stories of 'the ould ancient times.' The custom is a curious relic of sun-worship at the Summer Solstice.

In many parts of Europe blazing wheels were formerly rolled downhill at this season, perhaps this may be the origin of the curious 'Cheese-rolling' ceremony which takes place every summer at Cooper's Hill, near Gloucester. It is said to be annually performed to preserve to the people the right of common. A spectator tells us that in 1912 the Master of Ceremonies, a Mr. W. Crookes, who had acted in the same capacity for thirty years, appeared wearing, as he generally did on this occasion, a brown top-hat, which was won by his parents many years previously in a dancing competition. He had also donned a white chemise over his coat! Taking his stand by the May-pole on the top of the hill, he called loudly and frequently to the crowd to 'form the alley' down the slope. The course then being cleared, the Vicar commenced the rolling by sending the first cheese bowling swiftly down the hill, nine youths rushing helter-skelter after it, some of them 'pitch-poling'—as turning head over heels is locally called—in their frantic pursuit of the 'cheese,' which is a disc of wood wrapped in pink paper. It is stopped by a hedge at the foot of the hill, where the first youth to seize it must bear it triumphantly up the steep ascent again, to exchange the wooden cheese for the real prize one. There are other amusements at the festival, such as races, jumping, and other contests.

At Stockton the newly-elected Mayor and his friends throw apples and nuts from the balcony of the Town Hall to the children assembled below. This odd practice was inaugurated by Stockton's first Mayor, Robert Burdon, in 1495, and each of his successors has observed the rite.

At Berwick a strange ceremony, known as 'Churching the Mayor and Sheriff,' takes place annually at the fine old Parish Church. It dates from a time when a number of boys and girls receiving free education and clothing at a church school in the borough, were obliged to present themselves yearly at the church on 'Mayor's Day,' to be examined on their knowledge of the Catechism.

Now only the boys from one of the schools attend; they are placed in the centre of the nave, where, in the presence of the Magistrates, they solemnly repeat their Catechism at the request of the clergy.

A touching service takes place on All Souls' Day (November 2nd) at Gunwalloe Cove, Cornwall, when the clergy and choristers, in their vestments, march in solemn procession to the seashore, carrying flowers and lighted candles in their hands, to pray for the souls of those drowned at sea. After the service the blossoms are thrown into the waves—a consolation, doubtless, to mourners whose dear ones sleep in a vast ocean grave where no loving hands can lay sweet blossoms.

The shepherds of the Cotswolds have not quite discontinued the ancient practice of taking round the wassail-bowl at Christmas. Some of these 'mazers,' or

wooden bowls, are very curiously carved, and are extremely old—several centuries have passed since many of them were carved by the clever craftsmen of bygone days. The mazers are decked with ribbons, evergreens, and paper flowers—if fresh ones cannot be obtained—and the bearers sing:

'Wassail! Wassail! our jolly Wassail!
And joy shall go with our jolly Wassail!'

The vessel contains ale or cider, into which people are supposed to drop a coin. After the round of the parish has been made, the wassailers drink the contents of the bowl and divide the money between them.

MAUD E. SARGENT.

TRICKED INTO SAFETY.

A DROWNING calf was once rescued in a very curious and ingenious way. It had fallen into a large reservoir. On the afternoon that this happened the owner of the reservoir was entertaining two musical friends, a violinist and an organist. While an impromptu concert was being given by these gentlemen, a very much excited farmer arrived with the news of his unfortunate calf's accident and piteous plight. The concert came to an abrupt end, and the little party hastened to the reservoir in which the poor animal was swimming about. As it had been swimming for quite half-an-hour, the farmer despaired of rescuing it, and every moment he expected to see it sink from sheer exhaustion. But the organist suddenly recollected that somebody had once said, 'Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast,' and he thought that it might also have charms for the poor little calf. So the men hid themselves, and then the organist sang a high-pitched minor third, which is practically all the music a calf can make. The trick was a complete success. The calf, hearing, as it supposed, the call of a relative, at once turned about and swam in the direction of the sound. It came close up to the side of the reservoir, and when within reach was drawn out of the water, to the great joy of its owner and the satisfaction of the organist and the rest of the rescue party. The calf, which must have had a vigorous constitution, seemed none the worse for its adventure.

The moral of this little tale is: Cultivate your ear, and practise the singing of intervals! E. D.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

BY ARCHIBALD MARSHALL,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

IT was unfortunate for Jimmy Henshaw that an operation for appendicitis should have laid him up just at the time when he would have been enjoying his first term at Whyborough. The operation itself was nothing much to worry about, but he did not recover from it quite as quickly as had been expected. So it was decided to keep him at home for the rest of the year, and send him to Whyborough for the Easter term. By then, all the new boys, who had come at the regular time, had settled down to the life of the place, and Jimmy had to get into it by himself, and without the support that new boys at a public school have in being all in the same case.

The platform at the London terminus was full of Whyborough boys and relations who were seeing them off. Most of them had the air of knowing each other very well, and being glad to meet again. Jimmy had nobody to see him off. He had come up from his home in Hampshire in the morning, by himself, had his lunch, and been driven to Liverpool Street, where he had hung about for a couple of hours before the first of his new schoolfellows had made his appearance. He was feeling very depressed, and his chief desire for the moment was to find a carriage in which he could travel to Whyborough by himself. For in face of all these boys, none of whom was without a friend to talk to, he felt extraordinarily shy, and dreaded his first introduction to them.

It seemed to be the accepted thing for all the boys to travel third-class. Jimmy's mother had told him to do what the rest did; but when he found the third-class carriages filling up, he went and bought a second-class ticket. He thought that if he wrote to her and fully explained the reason, she wouldn't mind.

He got into a carriage where there were already two ladies seated, and thought he would be safe there. But a few minutes before the train started a group of boys came along looking into all the compartments, and when they saw this one, with only three seats taken, they bundled into it, laughing and joking.

The two ladies, who seemed to be not overfond of boys, made exclamations of disgust, and then agreed to go elsewhere, making it quite plain that the company was not to their liking.

The boys behaved very well. Two of them lifted various bags and packages from the rack, and handed them out to the indignant females, and none of them made any remark in answer to the uncomplimentary things that had been said about them. But when the carriage was cleared of all but themselves, a cheerful-looking, rather tousle-headed boy of about Jimmy's age, said to him politely: 'Wouldn't you like to go with Mother and Auntie, dear? I'm afraid the noise we make may give you a headache.'

The others laughed, and Jimmy found himself saying in an unconcerned voice, 'No, thank you. I think I'll stay where I am.'

As he found his voice, he found his self-possession at the same time. After all, they wouldn't do him any harm, and probably wouldn't want to. And if the boy with the tousled head had a tongue in it, well, so had he in his.

There were five boys in the carriage besides himself, and all seemed to be about the same age except one, who was two or three years older. They all looked at Jimmy, and the older boy, who was thin and solemn-looking, and wore spectacles, said, 'I don't seem to remember your face, sir. May I ask if you are being educated at Whyborough School?'

The others laughed again, and Jimmy said, 'I'm going there now.'

The solemn-looking boy rose from his seat and took off his hat. 'I am glad to be the first to welcome you to our ancient seat of learning,' he said. 'Allow me to introduce myself. Mr. Norman, commonly known as The Conqueror, in allusion to the prowess of my great ancestor, William the First, ten-sixty-six. May I ask your name, young sir?'

'Henshaw,' said Jimmy shortly. He saw that he

"They bundled in, laughing and joking."

was being 'rotted,' but he had no objection to that, if the rotting did not become ill-natured.

'Henshaw! Thank you!' said the Conqueror. 'Allow me to make known to you the rest of your young schoolfellows. This is Mr. Pilling.' He indicated the tousle-headed boy. 'He is sometimes called Little Liver, in allusion to——'

'No, he isn't,' interrupted Pilling; 'at least not without biffing the person who calls him that one in the eye. I don't mind Pills, or Beecham, or Carter, but the other's barred.'

'You hear that?' said the Conqueror. 'Remember it, unless you want to be biffed in the eye. I next bring to your attention Mr. Bradgate, who plays the fiddle, and is consequently known as Catgut Minor. A violinist higher up in the school, but no relation to Bradgate, is Catgut Major.'

Bradgate was a small, delicate-looking boy. He flushed angrily. 'Nobody calls me that but you,' he said. 'You're always trying to fix everybody with rotten nicknames. You wouldn't like it yourself.'

The Conqueror took no notice of this protest. 'This is Mr. Taylor,' he said, 'commonly called Snips. And this is Mr. Henderson—Hender we call him—quite a promising young footballer.'

Henderson was a thickset boy with a pleasant expression of face. Jimmy had liked the look of him from the first. When Norman had finished his introductions, Henderson said, 'The Conqueror thinks he's very funny, as I dare say you've found out. He's no good at games, so he tries to keep his end up by rotting everybody all round. At least, he doesn't rot the older people much. Still, that's a detail. What's your House, Henshaw?'

'Stanhope's,' said Jimmy.

'Now that's a curious thing,' said the Conqueror, quickly. 'We're all Stanhopes here. How very fortunate that we should have come together in this way!' He had looked rather disconcerted at Henderson's remarks about him, but seemed determined to keep the upper hand in the conversation all the same.

'What school do you come from, and why didn't you come to Whyborough last time?' asked Pilling.

'I've never been to school,' said Jimmy. 'I didn't come last term because I had had an operation, and wasn't well enough.'

'Well answered,' said the Conqueror. 'Have you been brought up at mother's knee?'

'Oh, shut it, Conqueror,' said Henderson. 'Give the chap a chance. Where do you live, Henshaw? Have you played any games? Why have you come to Whyborough?'

'I live in the New Forest,' said Jimmy. 'I've been taught by Mr. Spedding—he's the Vicar where I live. He was at Whyborough.'

'What—A. J. Spedding?' asked Pilling.

'Yes.'

'Well, you've been in luck, young man,' said the Conqueror. 'Has he coached you in cricket?'

'Yes.'

'Does he think you're going to get into the eleven?'

'Not just yet,' replied Jimmy.

Henderson laughed. 'That's one for you, Conqueror,' he said.

The Conqueror looked at Jimmy with little favour. 'You're not going to be allowed to be cheeky, you know,' he said. Then he turned to Bradgate. 'Do you know who A. J. Spedding is?' he asked.

Bradgate blushed. It was plain that he didn't. 'I suppose he's a cricketer,' he said.

'Yes, he is a cricketer—one of the best we're ever had at Whyborough, and you ought to know it. He was Captain here and Captain of Cambridge, and played for England, but he doesn't play now—at least, not first-class cricket. I suppose he's too old. How old is he, Henshaw?'

'I don't know,' said Jimmy. 'I suppose about sixty. He's a scratch golfer.'

'Thank you, Henshaw. Perhaps you would like a little information about Stanhope's, and the people of importance there. Stanhope himself is a man whom we all love. He goes his way and we go ours, and the result is that we are envied by all the other Houses.'

'I'm not so sure about that,' said Henderson. 'Old Stanhope is all right, but there are a lot of rotters in the House, and he doesn't keep them in order. You're one of them, Conqueror, so you ought to know.'

'It isn't a bad house,' said Taylor. 'But we've gone down in football, and I don't believe we're going to do much in cricket this year. I shouldn't think the fellows in the School House or at Cartwright's envy us much.'

'I was only referring to the freedom we enjoy,' said the Conqueror; 'and we must always remember that games are not everything in life. The next person to bring to your notice at Stanhope's, Henshaw, is the Head of the House, Bertram. He is a very earnest person. We call him Good-of-the-House Bertram, because he is always talking of it. You'll have to do something for the good of the House if you are to get on with Bertram. If you can't do this you'll have to do that; so I advise you to make up your mind what you are going to do at once, and tell him when he talks to you. Collecting stamps isn't any use. You can't play the flute, I suppose, can you?'

'No,' said Jimmy.

'That might do, because you could join the band. It's a pity you can't play the flute. Are you good at Bradshaw?'

'What do you mean?'

'How extraordinarily dense you are, Henshaw! Bradshaw is a Railway Guide, and there's a competition going on in *Wilson's Weekly*, which Bertram is determined that Stanhope's shall win. You really don't seem to be much good at anything. I hope you won't turn out a thorough disgrace to Stanhope's, but I'm half afraid you will. Did you go to any theatres in the holidays, Hender?'

(*Continued on page* 150.)

ONLY A BOY.*

HE was only a boy with a loaf or two,
And the crowd was great, and stretched out wide;
And the fishes he had, they were but few—
But the people sat down side by side.
And One took the loaves, and brake the bread,
And they gave to them that asked yet more;
And a multitude that day was fed
By the scanty supply that a young boy bore.

He was only a boy, and the ship was aflame,
And the sky was lit with a lurid light,
But his father had never called his name,
So he stood at his post with a courage bright.
He was only a boy, and the world is wide,
And many brave deeds are daily done;
But the boy on the burning deck that died,
His crown of laurel for aye hath won.

* This poem was written just before Boy Jack Cornwell won the V.C. in dying at the post of duty for his country. The Editor of *Chatterbox* thinks it better to print it without alteration or the addition of Cornwell's name, because the verses show that spirit which can always be expected of the boys of Britain and the Dominions overseas, whether they get the chance of an heroic death or not.

He was only a boy that had just left school,
But young as he was, he was at the front,
And he led his men, serene and cool,
And that day his regiment bore the brunt.
It is true that he fell, but fell with glory—
The day had been lost except for him—
And to-day his men are telling the story,
And the eyes of them that tell it are dim.

Are you only a boy? Yet these were boys,—
One carried the store that fed the crowd,
One heartened his men in the battle's noise,
And Casabianca's name is proud.
And on the roll that bears the name
Of the deathless deed and the victory won,
There's a corner for boys, where bright as flame
Their names shine out, and the deeds once done.

FRANK ELLIS.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 130.)

TO all appearances Sandy was not very far wrong. A long line of camels was approaching, all of them heavily loaded, with great bags of merchandise hung on either side. With them walked or rode a number of wild-looking men. They were clad some in mere rags of clothing, others in loose tunics, and, with their bare limbs and swarthy faces, they made up an evil-seeming party.

Among them, however, were several who were clearly of higher rank. They were dressed in white flowing robes, with peaked hoods that half hid their features. Nearly all were riding on mules or horses, but one passed on foot whose appearance caused Dick to cry out in amazement. 'Why, Sandy,' he said, 'look at that tall chap with the gun! He's dressed exactly like Achmet!'

And so he was. From his red fez cap to his yellow, heelless slippers, he resembled their father's guide in every way.

'It isn't he, though,' was Sandy's comment. 'He'd a much larger beard than that man.'

'No, of course it's not he, silly! Did I ever think it was? But don't you see what it means? This is Achmet's own country; this is Morocco.'

Sandy squatted back upon his heels, round-eyed with excitement. 'Do you really think it is?' he said. 'I say, wouldn't that be useful?'

'Seems to me it's pretty certain. Look at those other fellows who are riding; they all have just the same dress, only it's tucked up.'

Remembering Achmet's gentle, courteous manner and kindly ways, Sandy was all in favour of emerging from their hiding-place and joining the party, but Dick reminded him that it was not in the least likely that any of these men would speak English. Besides, he did not at all like the look of the others, the wild fellows who drove the camels.

No sooner had the caravan passed, than another approached from the opposite direction, and that one was hardly out of sight before a third appeared. Evidently this was a very important road, although there was no sign of track or boundary beyond the fact that the sand was beaten hard by the feet of men and animals.

For a long time the boys lay and watched the strange procession, but as the day closed in, it became evident that something must be done.

'Look here, Dick,' Sandy ventured at last, 'we can't wait here for ever and ever! I'm simply starving, and I'm sure nothing good to eat grows on these prickly old bushes.

'I'm frightfully hungry, too,' said Dick, ruefully. 'But I'm bothered if I see what we can do. I don't like the look of these beggars a bit. I'll tell you what, though, suppose we stay here till some one passes alone. It wouldn't be so bad tackling one fellow.'

'There's something in that,' Sandy agreed. 'Besides, we could cut and run if he turned nasty, couldn't we? But I do hope to goodness he will come soon.'

Slowly the sun neared the horizon, lighting the whole scene with strange brilliancy. The wind dropped suddenly, and from the distant town came faintly the sound of chanting voices, rising and swelling, as the muezzins called the faithful of Islam to their prayers.

The day was finished. The last caravan had entered the city walls, and the quick changes of the brief twilight warned the two boys that night would soon put an end to any chance of finding food or shelter.

There was still light enough to see for a short distance when Dick suddenly stood upright and left the shadow of the bushes. He called to Sandy, and pointed along the road to the southward. 'Look!' he said, 'there's some one coming, and I believe he's all alone.'

Sandy believed so, too, and sincerely hoped that it might be the case. 'Let's go and meet him,' he suggested. 'It'll be dark directly, and he might cut up rough if we jumped out on him and he couldn't see us properly.'

There was no object in delay, as Dick agreed, so they stepped out on to the beaten track, and went along it at a brisk pace.

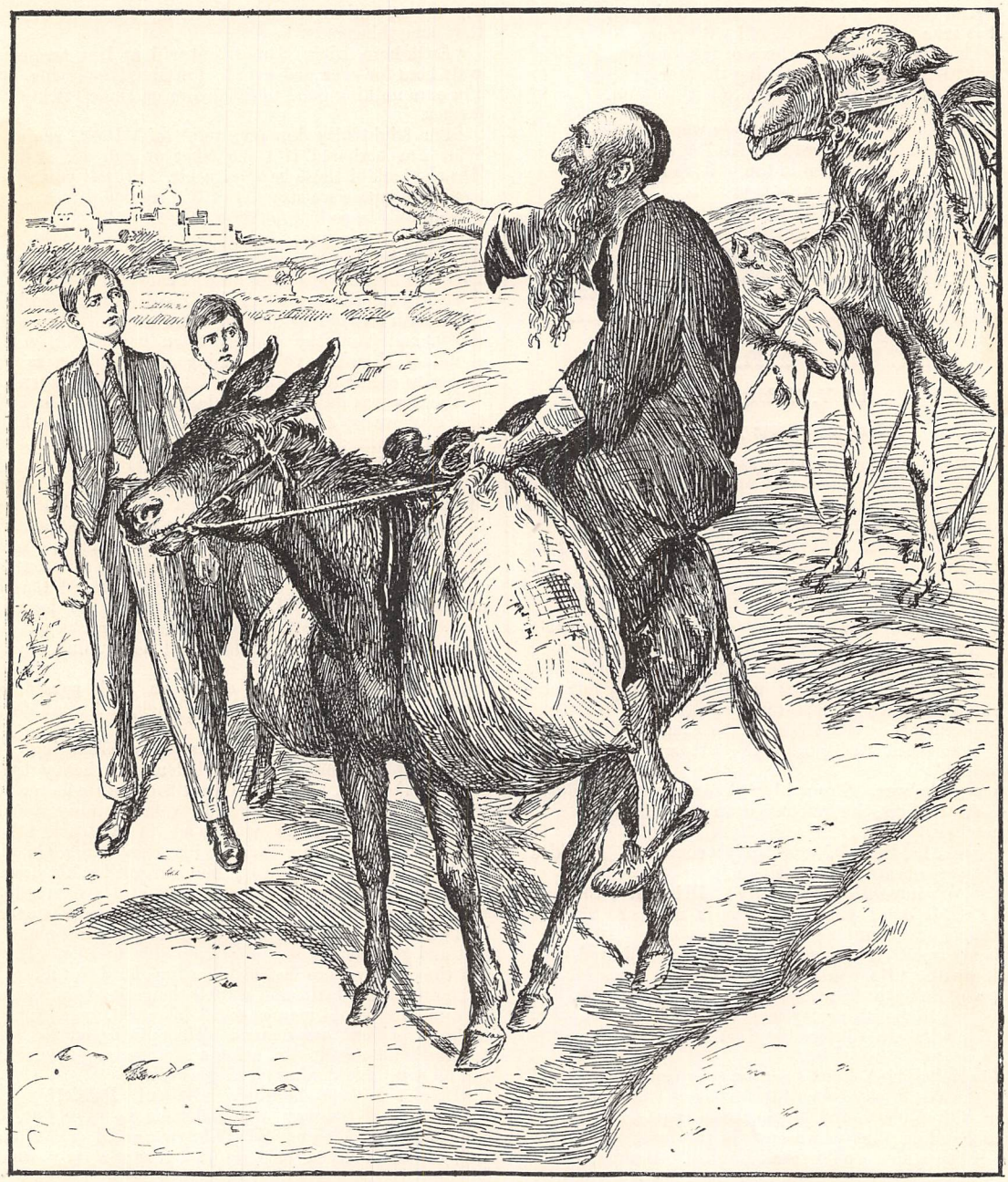
It was a curious little party that was approaching. In front ambled a small donkey, laden with heavy bags slung panierwise, and seated well back on its haunches was an old man. His long, dirty beard hung nearly to his waist, and he was clad in a black robe, which was tucked up, leaving his legs free. On his head was a small skull-cap, and altogether his dress, his long, hooked nose, and his keen, crafty expression would have labelled him as a Jew all the world over. Behind followed a couple of camels, with slow, clumsy gait and great necks, swaying from side to side. They and the donkey were fastened in a line, head to tail.

The boys stood still and waited their approach, and as he came up the old man checked his steed, and scanned them in evident amazement. Then he began to talk and gesticulate excitedly, using a strange tongue, and at last he urged his donkey on to pass them.

'Balak!' he kept shouting. 'Balak! Balak!'

'Get out of the way' was really his meaning, but, of course, neither Dick nor Sandy knew a word of Arabic, and, although his actions showed pretty clearly what he wanted, they stood their ground in sheer desperation. The donkey, having at last come to a standstill, had evidently made up his mind to make the best of it; he was in no hurry to get under way again, and stood, chewing a mouthful of dry herbage and blinking his long sandy eyelashes.

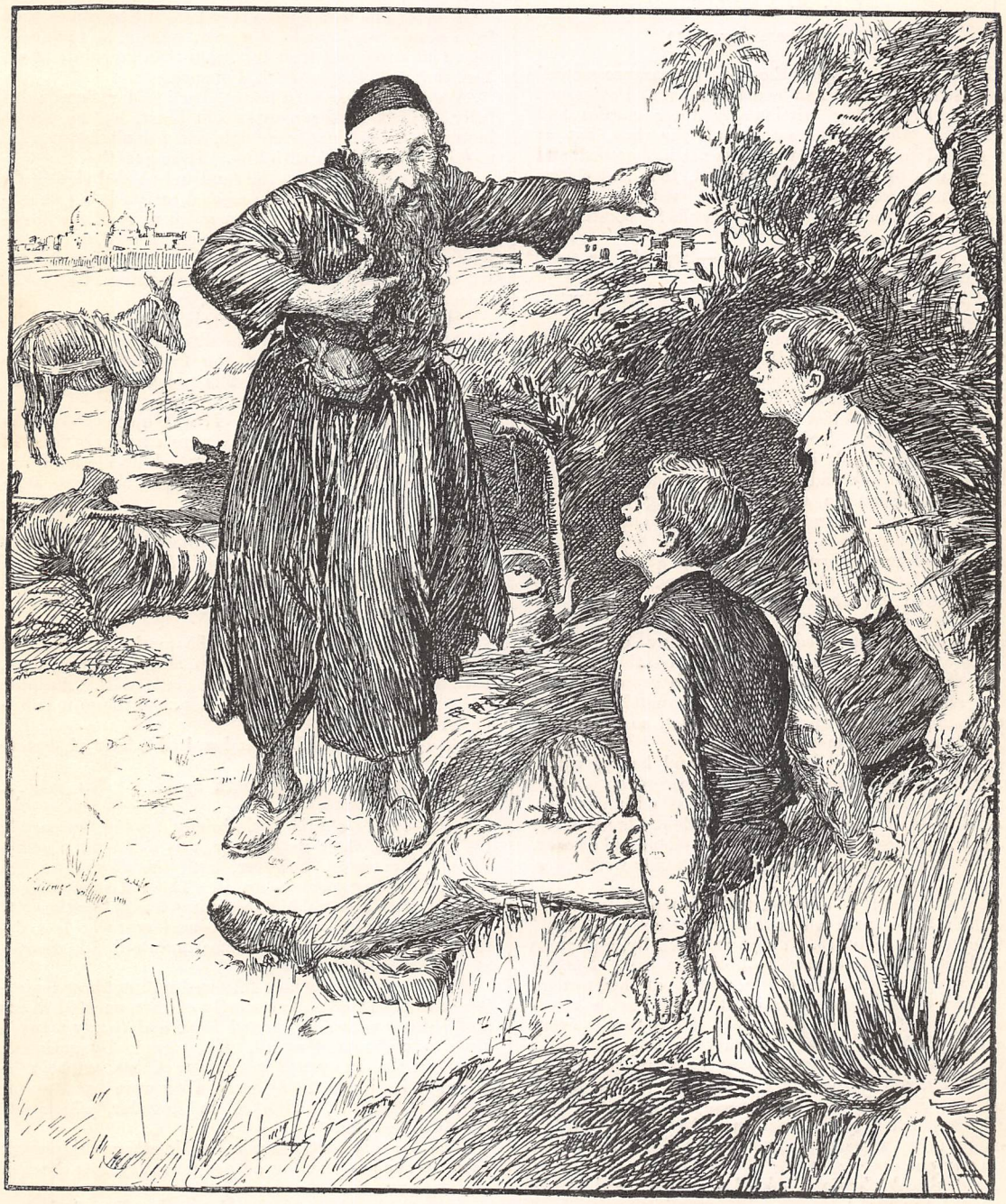
(*Continued on page* 146.)



"He began to talk excitedly, using a strange tongue."

CHATTERBOX

AN UNFORESEEN VISITOR.



"'I don't know what he's driving at,' Dick said at last."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 143.)

At last something about the boys' appearance seemed to strike the Jew, and he dismounted and examined them closely, noting particularly their clothes and shoes. He jabbered incessantly all the time, but at last seemed to realise that he was not understood, and had recourse to signs. These failed, too, and things were looking pretty hopeless, when, with a plainly questioning air, he said: 'Inglis? Inglis?' pointing at the same time to Sandy.

Dick nodded vehemently. 'Yes—English,' he said; and added, 'Shipwrecked!'

But the old man took no notice of the second word. 'Inglis—Inglis,' he kept repeating again and again, evidently highly pleased with himself, and there, but for a happy idea of Sandy's, their conversation would perhaps have begun and ended. But the younger boy pointed to his mouth, and Dick following his example, they succeeded at last in conveying the fact that they were hungry. This created a diversion. After a moment's gesticulating consideration the old man led his beasts aside and made them lie down amongst the bushes. Then he set about lighting a fire and making other preparations for an encampment. Anxious to ingratiate themselves, the boys set to work to collect dry brushwood and to give any other assistance that was obviously necessary. The camels had squatted on their haunches, and, when their packs were removed, they grunted viciously. Their wants must be attended to before any one else's, and they certainly were not going to let their master forget it. He spread clothes on the ground before them, and fed each immediately, alternately scolding and commiserating with them—at least, so it seemed, by the tone of his remarks.

At last he produced his own food, and having boiled water in a blue enamelled kettle, he proceeded to make a strange decoction which more or less resembled tea. The fare provided was a kind of soft flabby bread, made up into flat buns, and with a pungent odour and flavour. Dick eyed his share rather askance, but Sandy was bolder, and attacked it at once.

'Get on, Dick!' he advised, with his mouth full. 'It isn't half bad—much better than it smells.'

The hot tea revived both boys wonderfully, and made their host, if possible, more voluble than ever. But the word 'Inglis' was the entire extent of his foreign vocabulary. He kept repeating the word with extraordinary satisfaction and glee, applying it in turn to every portion of their clothing. Before the time came for bed, he must have thoroughly convinced himself of their nationality, and of the origin of all their possessions.

Dick and Sandy slept—and slept well—on the bare sand, stretched round the embers of the fire, the Jew seeming in no way disposed to share his grimy blankets with any one else.

At daybreak, they partook of a similar meal to the supper of the night before. Afterwards the Jew took the two boys to a place amongst the brushwood that was thickly sheltered, and at a good distance from the roadway.

The old man then began to make a series of signs so elaborate and complicated, that Dick stared, puzzled. 'I don't know what he's driving at!' he said at last, hopelessly.

'I believe he wants us to stay here till he comes back from somewhere,' Sandy observed. 'Look, he's pretending to sit down and wait . . . and then he points to us. Yes, that's what it is, Dick, I'm sure.'

'Well, I suppose we'd better,' Dick said, rather doubtfully. 'He's rather a dirty old beast, but he seems inclined to be friendly enough, and I don't know what to do if we don't go with him. Here goes!'

And he sat down upon the sand and nodded vigorously to the Jew. The old man seemed satisfied, but he evidently tried to convey to them much more of his intentions by pointing to their clothes and his own, to the sun, now well above the horizon, and to various other objects, which appeared to the boys to have nothing at all to do with the matter under discussion.

Having gained his main point, however, he loaded up his camels, and departed in the direction of the city.

Fortunately, he had had the forethought to leave some food behind, and from this the boys guessed that he expected to be absent for some time.

They were not mistaken. It was quite late in the afternoon, and Dick and Sandy were extremely tired of waiting before the old fellow turned up again, minus his donkey and camels, but plus a most villainous-looking youth of about fifteen. The latter was dressed like the old man in a long black robe and small cap, and his features also were undoubtedly Jewish. To the boys' amazement his first words were: '*Bon jour, M'sieur*'; at least, that was evidently what he meant to say. His pronunciation was unspeakably bad, but it is useless to attempt to reproduce it.

Now, as I have already said, the mother of Dick and Sandy had been French by birth, and, in consequence, both boys spoke the language unusually well. As quite little fellows they had been accustomed to use it habitually.

'*Bon jour*,' replied Dick, and waited to hear what more would come.

'*Bon jour . . .*' said the youth again. '*Bon jour . . . bon jour . . . Anglais?*'

'*Oui—Anglais*,' said Dick, briefly, feeling that surely by this time their nationality was sufficiently established. Evidently, however, both the Jews attached the greatest importance to it. The old man hugged himself with glee, rubbing his grimy hands together and chuckling, whilst the youth seemed scarcely less delighted, and burst into an almost unintelligible flow of mixed French and Arabic.

The conversation which followed will not bear repeating in full. It consisted mostly of disconnected words and phrases which it puzzled Dick and Sandy many a time to understand at all. They gradually gathered, however, that the youth was named Abbas, and that the old man, Levi, was his father. They were Jews, as the boys had guessed, and lived in Mogador, which was the town near by.

Dick, for his part, described their strange shipwreck as clearly as possible, but he could not say how much of the story was understood.

Afterwards Abbas produced two bundles of clothes, and managed to explain that it would be necessary for the boys to wear them. He protested vociferously that there would be great danger if they appeared in Mogador dressed as Christians. At first Sandy refused

indignantly. 'I'm not going to put on his dirty night-shirt,' he protested. 'Nor that filthy cap either!'

To tell the truth, a cap and a more or less white tunic was about all that the costume comprised, and neither looked by any means inviting. Dick, however, saw that the Jew's argument was reasonable enough, and he at last persuaded his brother to acquiesce by setting the example himself, and by obtaining permission to retain some of their own under-garments.

Poor Sandy was nearly in tears over the indignity, but he was somewhat comforted by his amusement at his brother's appearance, garbed as a Moorish Jew boy. Indeed, they really both looked the parts very fairly, with their dark eyes, and skins tanned by wind and spray, whilst their light hair was entirely concealed by the close-fitting caps.

Old Levi calmly appropriated their discarded clothes, and rolled them up into a bundle, with which he refused to part.

(*Continued on page* 157.)

A NEW ANIMAL.

IN a certain school the word 'furlough' (the military term for 'leave of absence') occurred in the course of a reading lesson.

'Does any little girl know the meaning of that word?' asked the teacher.

Only one small hand was raised.

'Well, Bessie?'

'"Furlough,"' said the child, 'means a mule.'

'You are wrong,' the teacher said, 'it does *not* mean a mule. What made you think that?'

'I have a book at home that says so,' replied the little scholar.

'Well, bring it to school to-morrow morning, and show it to me,' said the teacher.

The child obeyed, and, the next day, triumphantly displayed the picture of a soldier riding on a mule. Beneath the picture were these words: 'Going home on his furlough.'

THE THOUGHTLESS CLOUD.

SOME clouds are playing in the sky—
Their mother said, 'Now, keep up high!
Remember, you are not to go
Above that garden down below,

'Because the children there, I see,
Have planned to have a birthday tea,
And all their hopes will be in vain
If we get low and make it rain.'

But one small cloud, I grieve to say,
Forgetting, chanced to float that way;
And on the garden as she passed
Big drops of rain came tumbling fast.

But very soon the sun popped out,
And cried, 'Now what are you about?'
The little cloud grew, oh, so red!
'Dear me! I quite forgot!' she said.

'I'll go away, then 'twill be fine,
If you will only stay and shine.'
And so the children had their fun
Because they loved the dear old sun!

THE GOODWIN SANDS.

WHEN storm-winds blow, too often there are awful shipwrecks and very gallant work by the lifeboatmen where lies that long stretch of brown-grey sand, which is to be seen a little from Ramsgate when the tide is low. For many centuries now the Goodwin Sands have caused the loss of vessels and of human lives.

It is told that here Earl Godwin, the father of King Harold, who fell at Hastings, had a great estate, for here in his time was the green and fertile Island of Lomea—now known as 'the sands of doom'—the Goodwins. For one wild winter night of storm, when the Earl sat in his hall feasting and listening to his harper, the heavy seas broke down the stout wall that had hitherto kept the waters out, and they swept deep over the doomed island. Ever since then the sea has kept its prey, and Lomea has become a mere legend, to be told by the fireside.

Some wise men say that there never was an island, and that the Goodwins appeared when the waters made an inroad on the coast. Yet when Julius Cæsar came out of Gaul and landed in Kent the coast was not as we now know it. Thanet was then a real island, and so was the place of the ruins of Roman Richborough, and Lomea was in existence.

It has been reckoned that Lomea was engulfed by the sea towards the end of the eleventh century. Certain it is that from deep down in the Goodwins—which have been found to be seventy-eight feet deep in sand—there have been brought up the teeth and tusks of rhinoceros and mammoths and tokens of the existence of human beings there in the days of long ago, long before the Romans came.

Notwithstanding that ships and their crews and cargos continued for hundreds of years to be lost here, nothing was done to warn shipmen of the dangerous neighbourhood until 1795, when an old vessel was anchored by the North Sand head to do duty as a lightship. Just about twenty-nine years ago she was replaced by a proper iron lightship showing a single light visible ten miles away. Now there are three of these lightships and plenty of large buoys to give warning to vessels not to go near the Goodwins.

It has found to be impossible to build a lighthouse on the sands. Only for a few hours at ebb tide is building possible, and storms are so frequent that many structures have been swept away before they could be completed even to half their height. The great depth of sand makes it almost impossible for the builders and engineers to get hold of anything in the shape of a solid foundation before a gale springs up and wrecks all.

In spite of the beacons, buoys, and lightships the place is always a place of shipwreck. For eight hundred years and more the Goodwins have been a centre of disaster to crews and their ships—often the sands swallowing them up wholly, just as a hungry boa-constrictor swallows a guinea-pig or a rabbit.

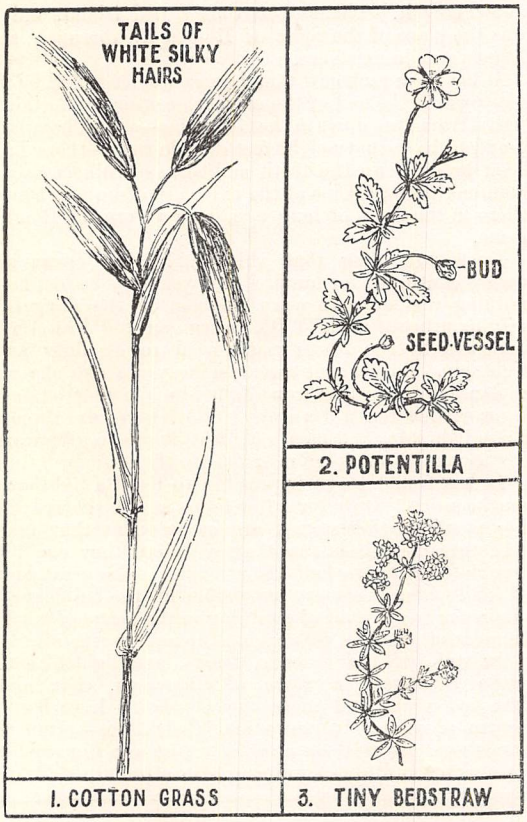
EYES THAT SEE:
THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.
V.—ON A MOUNTAIN-SIDE.

IT is a glorious morning in June, and circumstances have placed me in 'pleasant pastures,' for I am in my beloved Welsh mountains. Whenever I come here

I always wish I could bring all my friends to show them the haunts I love, and try to make them *feel* as *I* do the beauty and the wonder of this lovely corner of the world.

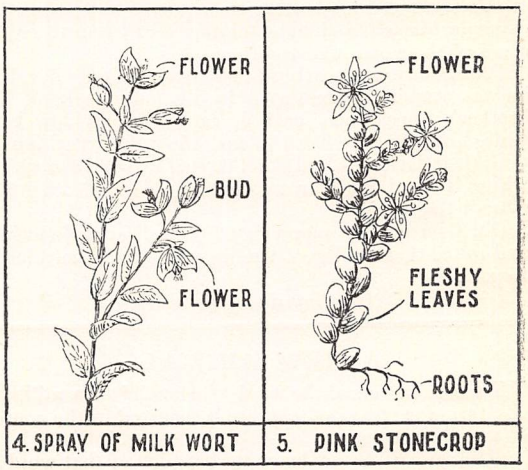
Let me try to tell you something about my surroundings. I am in the heart of the mountains—mountains on all sides of me—and the only sounds are the buzzing of flies and bees as they glide past on their way or stop to visit a flower. Now and again I hear a corncrake away in the distance, and besides this there is just the wind in the heather and bracken. I am resting on a piece of rock by the side of a mountain-path, a sheep-track, and before me, sloping down gradually, are rocks, bracken, and soft mountain grass, with here and there round tussocks of gorse (looking so tempting as a seat, but a veritable cushion of pins when tried), all dropping down to a small lakelet, the shores of which are much overgrown with reeds and waving cotton grass (fig. 1). Beyond the lakelet, again, rises the rugged mountain, whose sides are mottled with patches of purple heather and bracken. The silence and the scent are delightful.

All this, I hope, would be observed by the most casual tourist. But what I always love so much is what



I might call the *inner* life of a spot like this. As I am a lover of flowers, of course they have the first place with me. As I sit here, within a foot of me is a sweet little foxglove; it is only about eight or ten inches high, but glorious in colour and form. There are hundreds in the neighbourhood, cropping up wherever there is a cosy corner or a sheltered nook. Some grow to be three or four feet high, and others, because of shallow soil or open position, like my little friend here, are quite small, but charming, nevertheless.

At my feet are tiny, starry, yellow flowers which, upon closer observation, prove to be Potentilla, or



Tormentilla (fig. 2). You see the flower is almost like a Maltese cross in form. The foliage, too, is very pretty; it creeps about in and out among the grass, almost hidden and quite hard to separate. This little fellow belongs to the Strawberry family. You can tell this by looking at the calyx, which has a double set of sepals, like a strawberry's.

Again, within a few inches of this plant is the tiny little Bedstraw (fig. 3). It is the tiniest of its family, and is indeed small; the heads of flowers peep out from among the grass, gorse, or heather, looking like little bits of loose cotton-wool. The plant is a bit inclined to cling like its big relations, Clovers and Lady's Bedstraw. All these Bedstraws get their name from the fact that in olden times people used to stuff their mattresses with the plants dried, and very sweet they must have been, for most of them have the scent of hay.

Also within a few inches I see a dear little deep-blue Milkwort peeping out of the grass (fig. 4). This charming little flower grows so close to the ground and is so mingled in the grass, that it is quite difficult to gather without knocking off its flowers. These tiny flowers always remind me of minute butterflies. In my figure you see a flower which I think will convey my meaning. Sometimes they are almost white, and at other times a pale pink: but rich royal blue is the most common colour.

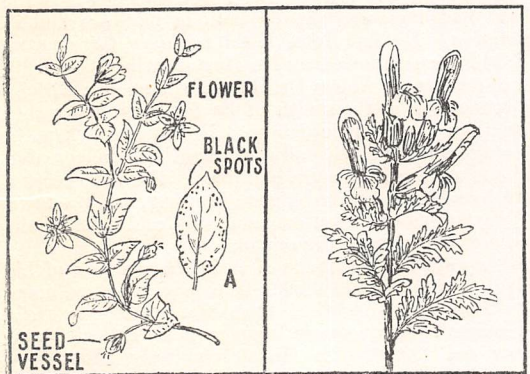
Close under my rock seat I find the pink, starry flowers of the Stonecrop, *Sedum Anglicum*, the English *Sedum*. This fleshy little gentleman can live and thrive on almost nothing, and I can assure you he almost had nothing where he lived when I saw him! (fig. 5).

There are several yellow flowers in the grass around me, and at first I thought they were all Potentillas, but I find a tiny pea-flowered specimen which I know to be the Birdsfoot Trefoil. It is very small in this position, though it can grow quite large (see 'Flowers of a Hayfield'). You can generally spot this little plant because

it has a splash of red on the back of its standard (the upper petal, you know). Another yellow flower I see here, too: it has five petals, so that it cannot be potentilla! No, when I gather it I find it is a very small St. John's Wort (fig. 6). This is the Trailing St. John's Wort, and can be recognised, like the leopard, by its spots. I could not see them at first, but when I used my little pocket lens on the plant I found it had tiny black spots on the back of the yellow petals and green sepals and leaves. I wonder why they are there? There must be some good reason. I show you an enlarged leaf, so that you can see where the spots are (fig. 6, A.).

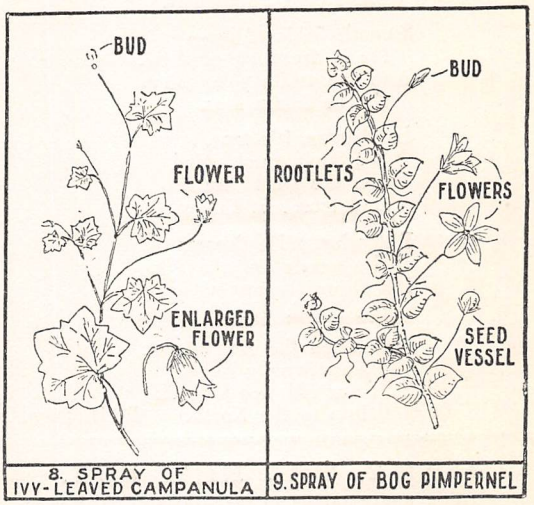
I have just made a short excursion from my rocky seat down to the lakelet to see what is there. Well, there are many beautiful little mosses and water-plants on the bog and in the water. I first met the Red Rattle (*Pedicularis sylvatica*), which I show you in fig. 7. It got its name of 'rattle' from the fact that its seed vessels are large and the seeds when ripe rattle in them when rocked by the wind. The flowers are irregular, you will notice, being lipped like our common Dead Nettle of the hedges. They are large for the size of the plant, which only stands about four inches above the ground. The blossoms are of a rosy pink, and the whole plant has a reddish tinge.

Next I found a very favourite friend of mine. I felt sure it *would* be there, but it is really difficult to discover; it is *so* small. I refer to the Ivy-leaved Campanula (*Campanula hederacea*), sometimes called Ivy-leaved Bell-flower. I show you a picture of it (fig. 8), but I give you no idea of its delicacy and grace. The leaves are of a pale green, their shape giving the plant its name (ivy-leaved); and the pale blue flowers are carried on stems which do not appear to be much thicker than a hair. The flowers droop in bud and



when the seeds are set, but are upright when in full bloom. They are, of course, very much like tiny harebells, to which they are near relations. In order to draw it, I took home little patches of the turf in which it grows, because if you try to extract the plant from its surroundings it wilts, and is practically dead in a few minutes.

Now one particular interest this plant has for me is the fact that when you find it you may be practically certain that you will find within a few inches, or perhaps a foot, another plant of quite a different family and having a pale pink flower. This little



gentleman is the pink Bog Pimpernel (*Anagallis tinella*). It is a creeping plant, with pairs of opposite leaves and delicate flesh-pink flowers springing from the axils of some of the leaves. Fig. 9 shows you a small plant. It is a little stouter in growth than the bell-flower, its main stem being fairly thick. This stem is creeping, and throws out rootlets at intervals. It creeps about among the grass and is another quite difficult plant to separate from it. Isn't it curious that these two plants invariably grow so close to each other? *Whenever* I have found the one I have *always* found the other! I wonder why this is?

After reading of all these humble little plants, I am sure you will understand what I mean by the *inner life* of my mountains. In other positions many of these plants would grow larger, but here they seem to be seeking the protection of Mother Earth. And this protection is often necessary, for sudden storms rise in these parts before you can realise what is happening, and the wind tears down the gullies and lashes the lakelets into quite a fury. In one of these sudden storms I have seen the water lifted from the lake by the wind and carried across and dashed on the shores in a small deluge. Even while I have been writing here this morning, suddenly the clouds gathered and the raindrops were pelting on my notes before I realised a storm was about. It only lasted about half an hour, but to me these unexpected changes make the country even more fascinating, for when the clouds clear away the beloved land looks even more beautiful than before, and its scent is beyond all description. All I can say is—it is just Wales!

E. M. Barlow.

NORTH BY WEST.

OUR old weathercock
Never veers round;
He's firm as a sapling
Set in the ground.

His head's to the North
With a few points West:
Perhaps he believes
The North Pole's best.

Smooth fields of ice—
He is dreaming of these,
And the white polar bears
Of the frozen seas.

In Winter, it's true,
We don't much mind
When the ponds are ice
And frost's in the wind.

But when with flowers
The woods are glowing,
It's absurd to pretend
The North Wind's blowing.

And when the August sun
Shines fiercely forth,
Still our old weathercock
Points to the North. R. B. Incf.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall.

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 142.)

THE boys began to talk about what they had done in the holidays. Jimmy sat silent and watched them, as they seemed to have done with him for the present. Of all of them he was inclined to like Henderson best, and hoped that he might be friends with him. But there was something in Henderson, young as he was, which seemed to put him above the rest. He seemed so sure of himself, and Jimmy guessed that he would not very easily make friends, though he would be slow to make enemies too. But his friendship, if he did give it, would be something deep and lasting, and anybody who earned it might consider himself fortunate. Jimmy was rather fond of trying to understand people in this way when he first came across them, and his ideas about them often turned out right.

He liked Pilling the next best. He was merry and light-hearted, and although he had made fun of Jimmy in the very first speech that had been addressed to him by any of his new schoolfellows, he had done it without any ill-nature. He now sometimes brought him into the conversation, as if he didn't want him to feel out of it. He would be much easier to make friends with than Henderson, and perhaps his friendship would not be so much worth having. But he was certainly an attractive boy, and Jimmy's heart warmed towards him.

Taylor seemed to be quite ordinary. He didn't talk as much as the others, but listened to everything, and whenever he did say something it was to the point. Bradgate talked a good deal, but nobody paid much attention to him. Jimmy put him down as 'rather a little rotter.'

Norman he already disliked. It came out during the journey that the other four were all new boys, and Norman had been at Whyborough for two years and a term. Jimmy wondered why he was travelling with four new boys instead of with those of his own age. Somehow, it didn't seem to say much for him. He was sometimes rather amusing in the things he said, but it was not the kind of fun that one expected from a boy, and Jimmy didn't laugh at any of his speeches, although the others did. But then they were pleased to meet each other again, and all of them, even Bradgate, seemed to be a little excited at going back to school, so they were inclined to laugh and be merry at anything.

Jimmy still felt heavy-hearted at leaving his home. His father was dead, and he had hardly ever been parted from his mother and his sister, who was a year younger than himself. He had greatly looked forward to school-life, but just at present he was not feeling particularly happy about it. However, the fact that all the other boys in the carriage seemed to enjoy the idea of going back spoke well for Whyborough. He listened eagerly to everything they had to say about it, and learnt a good deal from their talk. By the time they came to the end of the journey, the weight on his heart was lighter. No doubt he would enjoy himself as much as the rest when he had settled down to it. It must be a jolly place, and at least he would be able to play games and to make friends with boys of his own age.

CHAPTER II.

Whyborough was a very old school, though it was not long since it had attained the importance that it now enjoyed. Part of the school buildings were in an ancient monastery, and were extremely picturesque. Hardly less attractive were the parts that had been added in Elizabethan times, when the school had gained a new charter. It had gone on steadily, but with numbers never very high, until the eighteenth century, and then, for some reason or other, it had dwindled until there were only about thirty boys in it. But early in the nineteenth century there had come to Whyborough as headmaster, the famous Dr. Parry, under whom the school had increased rapidly both in numbers and in reputation. He had been Head for over forty years, and had been followed by Dr. Burton, who was hardly less of a success. When Dr. Burton was made a Bishop, the school was at the zenith of its fame and had rather more than three hundred boys. It had about kept to these figures ever since, and could hardly have increased without adding still more buildings. For all, except a mere handful of the boys, were boarders, and the town of Whyborough was quite a small one, and would have been nothing without the school.

Jimmy did not see much of it in the evening of his arrival. It was quite dark. The boys, who had come from London, all walked from the station to their respective Houses, leaving luggage to be collected and follow on. Stanhope's House was only about five minutes' walk. It was a large, old-fashioned, red-brick house facing the street, but with a big garden behind it, and the school playing-fields beyond.

There were thirty boys in Stanhope's House, and none of the other Houses had more, except the School House, which Dr. Parry had built and which held a hundred. Stanhope's had more room in it than any house except the School House, and was envied on that account, because all, except half a dozen of the younger boys, inhabited rooms in couples, and some of the elder ones had rooms of their own. These rooms had beds which folded up into cupboards during the day-time, so that they looked like studies, and were used to live and work in. In most of the other houses there were dormitories

and a general living-room, and only a few studies for the Prefects and older boys.

One of the misfortunes of Jimmy's operation and subsequent illness was that he had lost his chance of a room, until somebody should leave, which might not be until the end of the summer term. Choice went by seniority in the school, and, in the case of new boys, by the place they had taken in the Entrance Examination. He had taken a place near the top, for Mr. Spedding had coached him well in school work as well as in cricket. But as he had not come to school at the ordinary time his place had been taken, and the boy who had profited by his misfortune could not be turned out to make way for him. So he was housed in the dormitory with five others, and would live with them in the large Hall, where the House congregated for any purpose for which all the boys came together, including meals.

There was a great scene of bustle and talk in the Hall as Jimmy entered it with the rest. All the House was gathered there, for boys who had reached Whyborough earlier in the afternoon had come down from their rooms to greet the last arrivals. Mr. Stanhope was there himself. He was a large, smiling man of nearly sixty, and was talking to a group of older boys when Jimmy entered, not like a schoolmaster with his pupils, but as if they were friends whom he was glad to meet again. He came forward to shake hands with the boys who now came trooping in, and when he saw Jimmy he put his hand on his shoulder and said kindly: 'Ah, you're Henshaw, aren't you? And how did you leave Mr. Spedding? He and I were at school here at exactly the same time. I saw him make his first century in a big match. He has made plenty of them since, hasn't he?'

The name of A. J. Spedding was a passport to all Whyborough boys who took an interest in cricket, as nearly all of them naturally did. Jimmy found that his having been taught by the great cricketer made up for his never having been to school before, and one or two of the older boys asked him questions about Mr. Spedding, before they drifted away to their rooms, and left the Hall empty except for himself and the other lower boys, and the servants who were laying the table for tea.

There was still half an hour before tea, and Jimmy was summoned to the presence of Bertram, the Head of the House.

Bertram's room was as nice a one as a schoolboy ever inhabited. Jimmy looked with envy on the two basket-chairs, the pictures and trophies on the walls, the bookshelves, the faded but warm-looking curtains and carpet, all made cosy and snug by the fire on the hearth, and wondered whether it would ever fall to his lot to have a room of his own like this one.

Bertram was a tall boy with the beginnings of a fair moustache, and looked to Jimmy a very mature man. He was sitting at his table in the middle of the room as Jimmy entered and was busy with papers. 'Ah, Henshaw!' he said. 'Wait a minute till I've finished this.' He went on writing, and then blotted what he had written carefully, leant back in his chair, and looked at Jimmy.

Jimmy, in the meantime, had been looking at him, and had come to the conclusion that his air of being deep in important business was largely put on for his benefit. This idea was confirmed by the manner in which Bertram proceeded to address him.

'I sent for you, Henshaw,' he said, 'to have a little talk with you as a new boy. We are all very proud of Whyborough here, and I want you to take the same pride in it from the first as the rest of us do. I hope you are prepared to do that.'

Jimmy said that he was.

'Well, that's all right then. Now I have been Head of this House for a term, and I think I may say, without being conceited, that it has already improved its position under my Headship. It has always been considered one of the best Houses, but I want it to be considered *the* best—even before the School House; and if I can leave Whyborough thinking I have done something to make it so, I shall feel proud of myself. But of course I can't do that all by myself. Every boy in the House, from the eldest to the youngest, must do his share.' Here Bertram thumped the table. 'Now what are you prepared to do, Henshaw, for the good of the House?'

Jimmy put his hand up to his mouth to hide the smile that he couldn't prevent. He had forgotten for the moment that Bertram was called Good-of-the-House Bertram, but remembered it now. Unfortunately Bertram saw the smile, and was instantly annoyed by it. 'What are you sniggering at?' he asked angrily.

'Oh, nothing,' said Jimmy, and went on hurriedly: 'I'm sorry I'm not allowed to play football this term, as I've had an operation and haven't got over it quite. But Mr. A. J. Spedding has coached me in cricket, and says I ought to make a pretty good bat.'

A. J. Spedding's name for once failed of its effect. Bertram was a very poor cricketer himself, though he had struggled hard to improve. Cricket was actually rather a sore subject with him, and besides, it seemed to be something approaching cheek on Jimmy's part to speak of himself in the way he had.

'Oh, then perhaps you will be able to give us some help in the House matches this summer,' suggested Bertram.

Jimmy was not to be caught in this trap, and kept his mouth shut, though some sharp retorts suggested themselves to him.

'Can you play any musical instrument?' was Bertram's next question.

'No,' said Jimmy.

'That's a pity, because I am trying to get up a House orchestra. I play the violin myself. Would you like to learn the flute?'

'No, thank you.'

Just then the door opened, and a pleasant-faced boy of about eighteen came in. He looked at Jimmy and at Bertram sitting at the table, and smiled.

'Hullo!' he said. 'Asking this person what he can do for the good of the House, Bertram?'

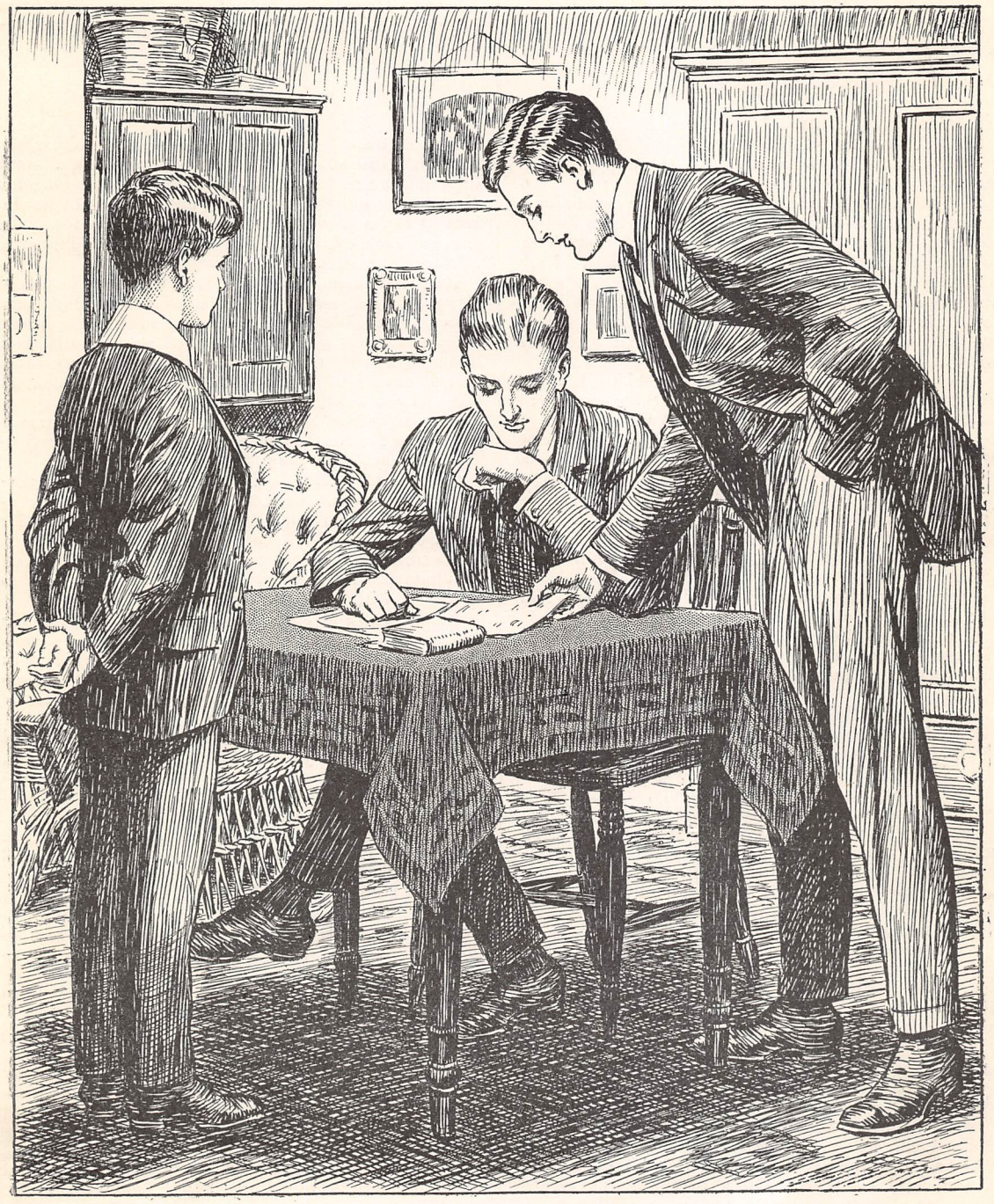
Bertram moved uneasily in his chair. 'He says he's a cricketer,' he replied. 'He's been coached by A. J. Spedding.'

The new-comer looked at Jimmy with interest. 'Well, I hope he has made something of you,' he said. 'I'm Captain of Cricket here—Stanhope's, I mean. We'll see what we can do with you next term.'

So this was Manning. Jimmy had heard him mentioned in the train, with reverence. He was the best slow bowler in the School Eleven, and a good bat besides. He was also in the Football Eleven, and altogether Stanhope's brightest athletic star. He seemed to be nice too, and carried himself without any side. Jimmy was prepared to make a hero of him on the instant.

(*Continued on page* 154.)

"'What are you sniggering at?' he asked angrily."



"The two boys could make nothing of it."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 151.)

'LOOK here, Bertram,' said Manning, taking no further notice of Jimmy. 'I've mugged out a few of these things. I wonder if I've got any that you haven't.'

He put on the table some sheets of paper containing a series of pictures—cabalistic signs, which were in fact items of one of those competitions which were very popular in penny weekly papers a few years ago. Each hieroglyphic represented the name of a railway station, and the prize for guessing all of them right was likely to be a large sum of money, as these competitions were just then at the height of their vogue, and thousands went in for them.

'I've just been collecting all that people have brought back with them,' said Manning. 'But there's one here that nobody has got—I see you haven't either.'

'No, I couldn't get that one,' said Bertram. 'It must begin with B—as I suppose that's a bee, unless it's a wasp—and end with PLACE, as there's no doubt about the letters. But I can't find anything that fits. What's that in the middle? It's a hand pointing at you. The whole thing's a puzzler.'

The two boys studied it, but could make nothing of it.

'Here, young Henshaw, come and have a look,' said Bertram. 'You *might* just hit on it by chance.'

'I expect it's Beaulieu,' said Jimmy, pronouncing it 'Bewly'—more because that place was near his home than because he understood exactly what was required of him.

'Don't be a little ass,' said Bertram.

But Manning said, 'Wait a minute; I wonder if he's right. B; and the hand pointing might stand for "you." But what about "place"?'

'It's spelt "lieu," but pronounced "ly,"' said Jimmy. '"Lieu" is French for "place."'

'By Jove! I believe he's got it,' said Manning triumphantly. 'That's been puzzling me all the holidays. I say, young 'un,' he added with a grin, 'you seem to be a pretty sharp lad; but did you know anything about this competition before?'

'No,' said Jimmy. 'But I live near Beaulieu, and it just came into my head.'

'Well, it's a lucky thing that you do live near Beaulieu,' said Bertram. 'Nobody who didn't would be likely to guess that. You've done the House a good turn. You can go now, Henshaw.'

Manning laughed. 'You might tell him as a reward,' he said, 'why he's done the House a good turn.'

'Well,' said Bertram, 'the whole House is going in for this competition, and if we win it we shall get a lot of money, which we shall spend on something for the House itself. Now, you understand you're not to let out to a soul outside this room what you've discovered. If you do, I shall give you a rubbering that you'll remember all your life. Other fellows are going in for it, too, though we're the only House that's competing all together. You're not to let that out either. Do you understand?'

'Yes,' said Jimmy.

'Very well, then. Now clear out. Oh, by-the-by, I forgot to say that you're to fag for Norris. His room is Number 9. You'd better go and see if he wants anything now.'

'All right,' said Jimmy, and went out.

CHAPTER III.

THE system of fagging at Whyborough had largely fallen into disuse. Only the Sixth Form were allowed fags, and their duties were not as a rule very onerous. But Jimmy did not know this, and wondered what he was in for, and what his fag-master Norris would be like, as he made his way along various passages in search of room Number 9.

He found it and went in. It was a room not unlike Bertram's, but smaller and not so well furnished. Two boys were standing by the fireplace, and were intent upon the same series of pictures as Bertram and Manning had been. They looked up as Jimmy came in, and one of them said, 'Hullo! Who are you, and what do you want?'

'I'm Henshaw,' said Jimmy. 'Bertram told me I was to fag for Norris, and come to room Number 9 to see if he wanted anything.'

'Oh, I see. Well, I'm Norris, but I don't want anything, thank you. In fact, I've bagged Kindersley as my fag from Williams. So you'll have to fag for Williams, and he isn't coming till to-morrow.'

He turned away, but the other boy said with a look at Jimmy, 'Rather hard luck to turn him over to Williams without telling him something, isn't it?'

Norris looked at Jimmy, somewhat irresolutely. He seemed a young boy to be in the Sixth Form, and was small and slight. The other boy was much bigger in build, but seemed to be about the same age. His name was Percival, and he was in the Upper Fifth, as Jimmy discovered later.

'I don't want to have a row with Williams,' said Norris. 'Of course, I've a perfect right to bag his fag, as he isn't coming on the first day, and he can't make any fuss about that. I know Kindersley at home, and he asked me to take him.'

'Oh, well, if you don't tell him, I shall,' said Percival. 'Look here, Henshaw, Williams expects a lot from his fags that they're not supposed to have to do, but he isn't likely to be over-gentle to you if you refuse. You'd better keep a sharp look-out.'

'Thank you,' said Jimmy. The warning was no doubt well-meant, but he did not quite know what to do with it.

'If he bullies you,' said Norris, 'you can appeal to Bertram. But don't tell him I said so.'

'All right,' said Jimmy, and waited for more; but no more came. The two boys returned to their puzzles.

'Now what on earth is this?' Percival said as Jimmy was turning to go. 'An insect, a hand, and the word "place"? I can't do anything with it. I say, Henshaw, just come and look at this and see if it means anything to you.'

'I've just told Bertram and Manning what it is,' said Jimmy; 'and they said I wasn't to tell anybody else.'

'Oh, you can tell me; I'm a Prefect,' said Norris. 'We are all told everything that's found out.'

'But I'm not,' said Percival. 'He's quite right not to tell us. I say, Henshaw, you seem to be rather a bright lad.'

'I'm going to Bertram to see what it is,' said Norris. 'I'll ask him if I can tell you, Percival.'

He hurried out of the room, and Percival went out after him. Jimmy went down to the hall, where tea was laid, and a lot of boys of all ages were already collected, while more were coming in. As a rule, the hall only filled for meals between the two bells, which were rung five minutes apart. But this evening the House wanted to hob-nob after the holidays, and this was a convenient meeting-place.

Bradgate came up to him. 'Where have you been?' he asked, in a somewhat injured tone. 'Stanhope said I was to show you the dormitory and all that, and I've been looking all over the place for you.'

Jimmy told him where he had been, and Bradgate accepted his explanation, but still looked injured. He assumed a lofty air as he showed Jimmy about and told him various things that he had been told to tell him, and made it plain that as a new boy he considered Jimmy greatly his inferior.

Now, Jimmy was fully aware that his coming to school late would be a handicap to him for some little time to come, but he did not intend to take the lowest place in the school and keep it contentedly until a newer boy still should arrive at Whyborough, and he certainly didn't intend to be patronised by Bradgate, just because he was beginning his second term while Jimmy was only beginning his first. So he asked him a good many questions in a way that showed he expected an answer, and that the answer should be the right one.

Bradgate began to get huffy. 'You've got a pretty good cheek to talk to me like that,' he said. 'You'll soon learn that new fellows aren't thought much of at Whyborough, especially if they've never been to school before.'

'Are you thought much of at Whyborough?' asked Jimmy. 'I shouldn't have thought it. I asked you what time we have to get up in the morning, and I want to know.'

Bradgate looked at him. They were standing in the lobby, with the washing-basins all round them. There was something in Jimmy's air, new boy as he was, that made Bradgate answer his question, instead of saying something that would put him finally in his proper place. When they went back to the hall together, Jimmy was no longer the boy who counted least in Stanhope's House. Bradgate, for one, would never again consider himself his superior.

(*Continued on page* 166.)

A HOME FOR THE COLOURS.

IN the trench warfare of to-day colours are not taken into battle. Churches and cathedrals all over the kingdom are receiving them from endless regiments; for one of the last things to be done before going to the Front is to place the regimental colours in some quiet corner or on some lofty pillar that they may wait, in their guarded, peaceful resting-places, for the return of the men who are upholding their honour in very different surroundings. It is as if these banners, instead of leading our soldiers in actual battle, were praying for them at home.

Twelve Canadian regiments have found a singularly fitting haven for their colours—on Wolfe's tomb in Westminster Abbey. But for that frail, gallant little general, who, broken with ill-health and well-nigh despairing of ever taking that all-important town, Quebec (of first importance to us in our struggle to make Canada our own, since it guarded the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and so represented the gate of the Dominion)—but for him we might never have had the overseas contingents of which we are so proud to-day.

Weak in body, he overcame the greatest difficulties by the strength of his indomitable will. That Quebec *must* be taken he had fully determined; that it *could* be taken was therefore indisputable. And so, on a still, starlit night, a number of boats put off silently from the Island of Orleans, where Wolfe's army was encamped, and landed at the foot of the rugged heights on which Quebec was built. Up the steep, dangerous path, in single file, Wolfe's soldiers followed him; and in the fierce fight which ensued Wolfe led and encouraged them still: until at last, with the glad knowledge that the victory was ours, he fell—as many another brave soldier has fallen—on the field of glory.

And now, after more than a hundred and fifty years, the soldiers of the Dominion—in the winning of which Wolfe had so important a share—are glad to give their colours, as it were, into his keeping while they go forth to fight in the cause of the Empire for which he gave his life.

N. M. La Touche.

A PAMPERED PEKINESE.

OH, I'm a famous Pekinese; though probably you say:
'Well, here's a little doggie who is surely fond of play.'
But, though you might not think it from my portrait in a book,
I'm rather more important than I look.

For one thing, let me tell you, I'm the treasure of a queen!
My dwelling is a palace (and the finest ever seen).
And so, of course, my manners must be good, and better far
Than any little *common* doggie's are.

I understand that Carlo is contented with a bed
That's made of wretched rubbish in a cold and lonely shed;
And every night he watches, as a faithful dog and true;
But that is not what *I* should like to do.

I sleep in cosy comfort, and I'm seldom left alone;
I never feed, like Bully, on a vulgar mutton bone.
Such habits, let me tell you, I should look upon as *rude*;
In fact, I'm rather *fussy* over food.

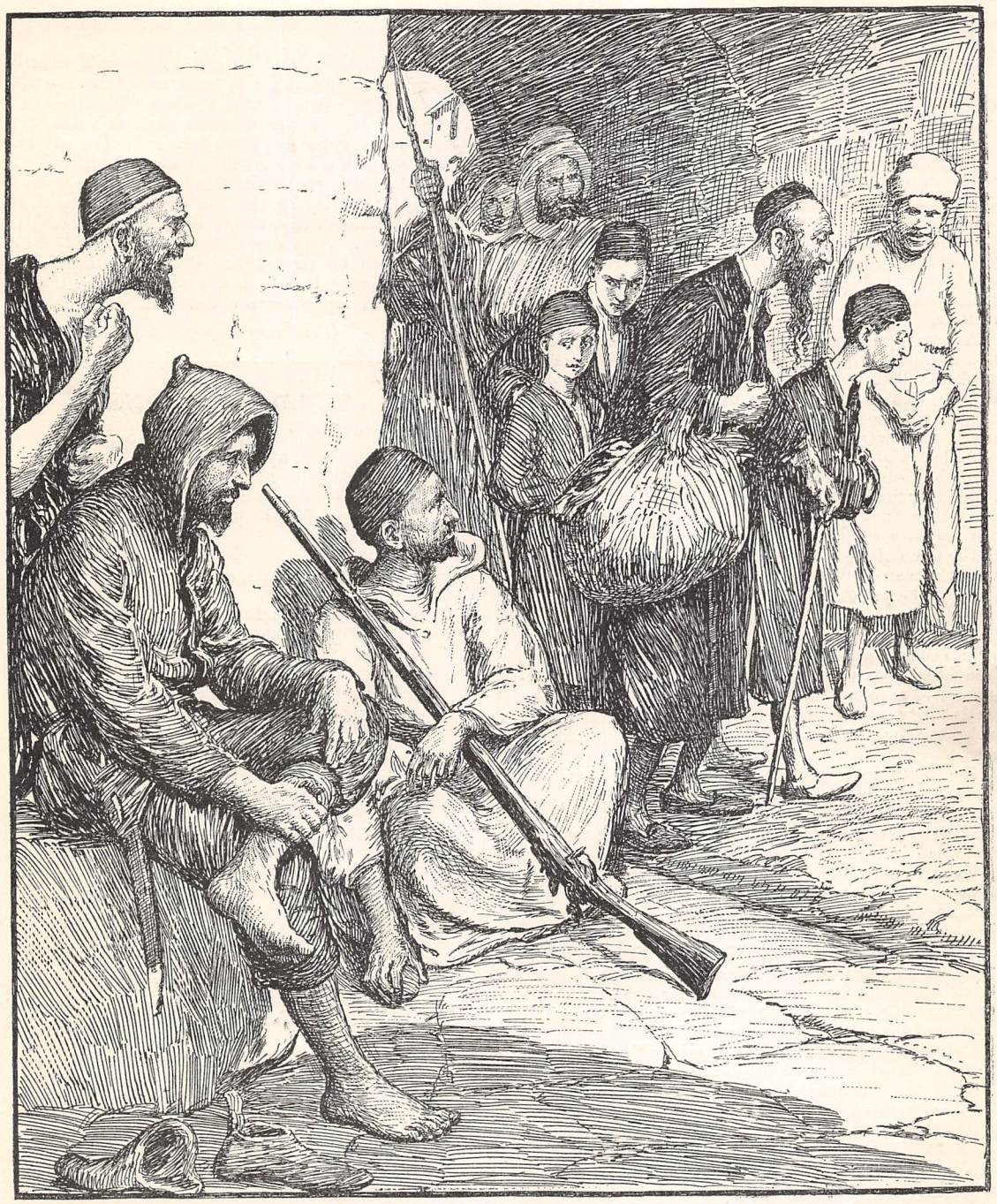
I don't suppose you know it, but the country of my birth
Is old enchanting China, on the other side the earth;
And there they gave me lessons which have taught me how to seem
As dainty as a kitten eating cream.

Well, if I do not please you (and the thought is very sad),
Forgive me, and remember it's the training I have had;
And (don't forget) if Carlo had been made to take his ease,
He might have been a pampered Pekinese.

John Lea.

"'I'm the treasure of a queen!'"

(Engraved from a painting by Frances Fairman.)



"They were treated with gibes and sneers."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 147.)

IT was getting late by now, and the Jews made them understand that they must hurry up, for the gates of the city would be closed at sunset. No doubt it was for this reason that Levi had encamped on the previous night outside the walls. After a walk of two or three miles, they entered the city of Mogador by a high-arched gateway. There was a guard set—fierce, wild-looking men, some of them in flowing Arab robes, and others in a kind of semi-military uniform. They took but little notice of Levi's party, but from

their expressions and tone Dick and Sandy gathered that they were treated with gibes and sneers. One, indeed, threw a stone in their direction, with a derisive laugh, but although it struck Abbas with some force he made no attempt whatever to retaliate. Sandy, however, clenched his fists, and it was only Dick's hand on his arm which prevented an explosion of anger.

They passed first along a filthy street, with high walls on either side; then they threaded their way through a maze of alleys and wide open spaces. Sometimes they passed between rows of open booths, where everything seemed to be on sale—slippers and clothes, pottery, scent, and ironware. Presently high windowless houses shut them in on every side; always they were whitewashed, and relieved only by a coloured door or shutter.

A hurrying crowd passed to and fro—Moors, Jews, and negroes jostling each other, with laded camels and donkeys. The noise and shouting was absolutely incessant, and everything was so strange and wild that the boys gained but little real impression of what they saw. They were half dazed with the hurry and turmoil.

At last a quarter of the town was reached where the whitish dwellings seemed, if possible, more squalid and forbidding than ever. Certainly, the roadway was filthier and the odours more pungent and disgusting. Here the majority of the inhabitants seemed to be dressed in the same black robes as their two guides, and mixing with the men were brightly-dressed women and handsome, dark-eyed children. They were not surprised to learn from Abbas that this was the Jews' quarter. Suddenly they turned in at a narrow doorway into a square courtyard. There were dwellings on four sides, fronted by open verandahs, one above the other. Passing up the narrow stairway the little party reached the small, dirty rooms of Levi and his family, and were welcomed by an ancient Jewess of most forbidding aspect.

The boys were ushered into a tiny, evil-smelling chamber, and there left to themselves, after the door had been carefully secured from the outside.

They were too utterly tired and dazed to eat the food which had been placed before them, and as they lay down on the wretched bed, with the foul air pressing down upon them, it seemed to Dick that it would have been better even to have risked starvation out on the clean, open shore.

Here, they were prisoners; there was little doubt of that. Even when they lay down, they could not sleep. Dick's brain was in a whirl; no sooner did he close his eyes than he pictured a score of fierce savage faces and a confused medley of wild scenes.

And Sandy was even more miserable, with the thought of a necessary confession upon his conscience.

'Dick,' he whispered at last. 'Dick, are you awake? There's something I must tell you.'

'What is it, old man?' Dick said gently, raising himself upon his elbow. 'Anything wrong?'

'Yes—beastly wrong. You know I had that little brown book in my pocket?

'Yes. Well?'

'Why, it's there still . . . and that hateful old Jew's got my clothes!'

CHAPTER IX.

If Sandy had expected violent blame from his brother, he was agreeably mistaken. Somehow, the loss of the book seemed a small matter beside other things which were troubling Dick now.

'Never mind, you couldn't help it,' he said, wearily; 'I dare say we shall get it back somehow, if—when we manage to escape. And, anyhow, it's no use to us till we do. We'd better not show that we value it by asking anything, Sandy; if we do, the old Jew will only think it's worth a lot, and stick to it all the more.'

Consoled and reassured, Sandy snuggled down to sleep, but Dick lay awake, panting and tossing in the close heat, most of that weary night. It was only the first of many. Next day it became quite evident that they were to be treated as prisoners, although why the villainous old Jew should wish to keep them in captivity was impossible to understand.

(*Continued on page* 163.)

THE DAINTY HEN.

'SHARPS!' cackled Mrs. Wyandotte—
Her beak up in the air—
'That stingy boy has brought us sharps
Again—I do declare;
It's *sharps, sharps, sharps*—day in, day out,
For countless nights and days;
I really think it's time we had
Some barley, oats, or maize.'

She strutted off; from other fowls
All day she held aloof,
And sat, in sulky solitude,
Upon the hen-house roof;
Till fussy Mr. Wyandotte,
Who feared she'd pine and die,
Crowed, 'Have a little supper, love:
A little, love, do try.

'I wish I had more tempting fare
Your appetite to coax,
But war is war, you know, my love,
And we, like other folks,
Must practise strict economy;
So make no more ado,
But come and have some supper, love,
Come—cock-a-doodle-*do!*'

LILIAN HOLMES.

THE OLDEST OF ALL LIVING THINGS.

SINCE the far-off ages—when, as we are told, in Europe there grew immense palm-trees and ferns and other growths which need great heat—there have been countless kinds of animals which have lived and died away altogether. Yet there is one species now existing which is the link between those ages long ago and the present time. It is said to be the oldest kind of living thing—the Tuatara of New Zealand.

To find anything like it we have to go back to times when it is thought mankind did not exist in Europe, for the tuatara is half like the crocodile and half like the turtle, and to-day each of these animals is wholly different from the other. The tuatara is the only surviving kind of animal belonging to the lizard-like creatures which existed many thousands of years ago.

Unluckily, it is itself in danger of being killed out of existence owing to the attacks on it by wild pigs, cats, dogs, stoats, and weasels which settlers have brought into New Zealand, where these animals were unknown before the white man came. Fortunately it finds some safety on the many small islands along the coasts of New Zealand, and the Government there has passed laws against any one killing this most interesting and harmless beast.

The tuatara is very friendly, and likes for its home the breeding-places of the sea birds, with whom it lives at peace. When hatched out of the egg the tuatara is about four inches long, and grows till it is almost thirty inches in length. The eggs, like those of the turtle, are always laid at the same time in the month, year after year, and are usually laid in a burrow about twelve inches deep, covered with sand or earth by the female tuatara, and left to be hatched out by the heat of the sun. They take from ten to twelve months to hatch, and the mouths of the young are closed for a time after they leave the egg.

The tuatara keeps to the same burrow year after year, and travels very seldom far from it in searching for spiders and other insects. When the rainy season or winter approaches it goes into the burrow, and sleeps till it is over. Then the tuatara comes out and lies basking in the sun, without any movement, and looks just like an animal of stone. Usually it is of a brown colour, and slips out of its skin like the crayfish; the new coat is different from the old one, having green and bright brown spots on it.

The tuatara is not often seen out of its hole or nest during June, July, and August, but is frequently to be encountered in other months enjoying its sun bath. Though it seems very slow and awkward it is very nimble when catching its food, and is not at all afraid of mankind, whom it surveys with a calm and meditative eye.

New Zealand has many singular and remarkable features in her wild life, but nothing stranger than this animal, which existed in the early almost unknown stages of creation.

A. TEGNIER.

THE MUSCOVY MERCHANTS.

England's First Friendship with Russia.

II.—THE FROZEN SEAS.

(*Continued from page* 115.)

WHEN Willoughby and his two ships were lost to sight, Richard Chanceler and his company went on their way very pensive and sorrowful. According to their orders, given them before for such an event, they laid their course for Wardhouse (Vardoehaus) in Norway, there to await their comrades if they came thither safely. Seven days they waited in vain; and Chanceler determined at length to proceed alone in the purposed voyage. As he was preparing to depart, it happened that he fell into company with certain Scottish merchants who were there. They heard his intention, and wishing him well, began earnestly to try to dissuade him from continuing his voyage, telling him of all the perils that lay before him. But he held that nothing was so shameful as fickleness of mind, and that a man of valour could not commit a more dishonourable act than to give up a great enterprise for fear of danger. He was therefore in no way changed or discouraged by the speeches of the Scots, remaining steadfast in his resolution. As for his own men, though they were sad for the loss of their companions, and not a little troubled by doubts about their own course, nevertheless they too were resolute, and prepared, under Chanceler's guidance, to make trial of all adventures without fear or mistrust.

So they put forth again into the Arctic Ocean, and sailed so far that they 'came at last to the place where they found no night at all, but a continual light and brightness of the sun shining clearly upon the huge and mighty sea.' Thus does the first Englishman to behold it describe the long Arctic day.

Having the benefit of this perpetual light, they entered at last into a great bay a hundred miles or more across. They entered, and some way within it cast anchor, and looked about them in every direction. Suddenly they spied afar off a fishing-boat. Chanceler and his men went towards it, and hailed the men in it. They were men of short stature, clad in skins. But the Lapps (for they were of that race) were amazed at the bigness of the English ship, and fled to land. Chanceler and his men followed, and at last overtook them; but still they were afraid, and cast themselves down upon the ground, offering to kiss his feet. He looked kindly upon them, comforting them by signs and gestures, refusing their worship, and raising them up gently from the ground. This humanity of his won him great favour afterwards in that place; for when he let them go, they spread abroad a report that strangers of singular gentleness and courtesy had arrived. Whereupon others of that nation came offering victuals freely to the newly-come guests, and only refusing to trade with them because their religion forbade them to buy foreign wares without their king's consent.

From the Lapps the Englishmen learnt that the country they had reached was called Russia, or Muscovy, and that Ivan Basilivitch (the Tsar Ivan the Terrible) governed it. They told also in turn of what nation they were, and asked that word should be sent to the king to grant them leave to trade. The Lapps heard these things very gladly, and promised to send word to their king 'out of hand.'

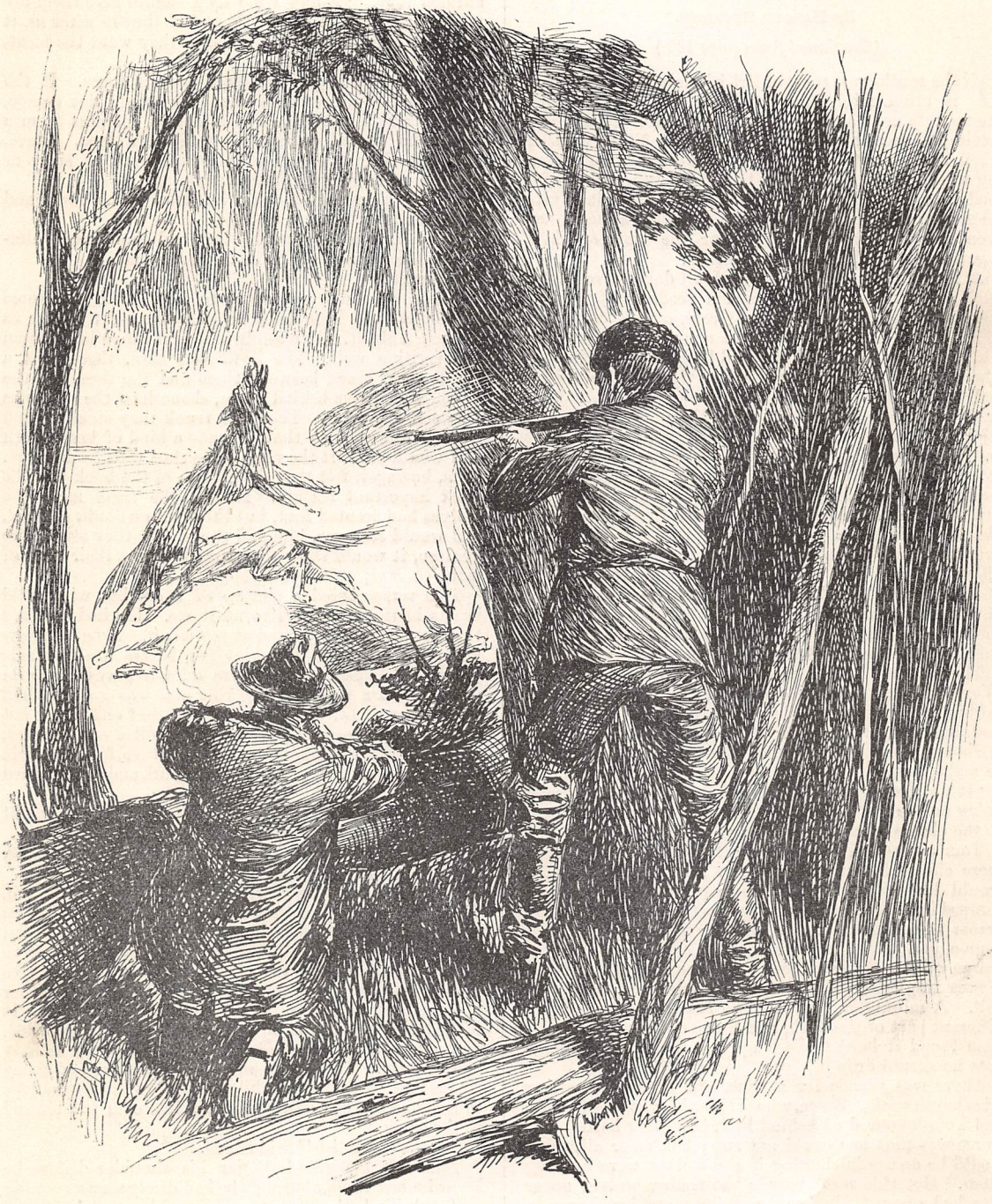
In the meantime Chanceler asked for more victuals, which they willingly gave him, and required also hostages of them, for his own safety. But this they would not grant, and secretly, while they were talking of these things, they sent a message to the king or emperor. He was pleased with the news, and sent a messenger to invite the Englishmen to his court. But by some ill-hap this messenger lost his way and went to a distant part of the coast.

Now, as no answer came, the chief Lapps did not know how to deal with Chanceler, and they could only make excuses and delays from day to day, until at last Chanceler, growing weary, told them that if he did not get an answer, he would depart and proceed with his voyage elsewhere.

At that the Lapps, not wishing to lose his wares if they could get leave to trade with him, determined forthwith to furnish him with all things necessary and conduct him overland to the king. And so Chanceler began his land-journey to the chief city of Muscovy.

(*Concluded on page* 170.)

"Still they were afraid and cast themselves down upon the ground."



"One of the flitting shapes rolled over."

IN THE DARK.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Continued from page* 138.)

On the south-west coast of British Columbia the winter is often mild, but they have cold snaps among the mountains, when for a few weeks the frost is nearly arctic, and there had been a long spell of bitter weather when Tom set out. The deer are at a disadvantage when the woods are deep in snow, but ranchers who hunt for food are not fastidious, and the Canadian game laws give them certain privileges. Besides, the wild animals had been singularly scarce, except for the wolves, which began to prowl about the homesteads.

After walking through the bush all day, Steve shot a buck at dusk, and because vension needs careful treatment and the meat would soon freeze, opened it at once. When he got the partly dressed carcase on his back, Tom remarked how the smell of blood hung in the biting air. The buck was not much larger than the British roe-deer, and light. It got dark before they set off again, but the bush was comparatively open and the undergrowth had withered down. The moon shone above the black firs and the snow glimmered a soft grey-blue between the tall, straight trunks. They could see where they were going, but walking was slow, because they broke through the frozen crust. Tom was tired and Steve did not talk much, but now and then glanced back over his shoulder and once stopped to listen. This was disturbing, and Tom wondered whether he was thinking about the wolves. They might be savage with hunger now the deer were scarce. But Tom did not want to speculate about this; he was cold, his single-shot rifle was getting heavy, and they had some distance to go.

The stillness of the woods began to jar his nerves. There was not a sound except the soft thud of snow falling from a branch and the crunch it made under their feet, but the latter sounded strangely harsh and loud. Although Tom disliked the silence, he did not want to make a noise. At length his companion stopped.

'It's a piece farther by the lake, but it would be easier going on the ice,' he said. 'Then we might get supper at the choppers' camp, if the boys haven't finished.'

Tom agreed. For one thing, the open lake would be more cheerful than the shadowy bush, and he felt he would like to see a fire. Some of the ranchers were camped in a bark shack, cutting logs that would be floated across the lake for a new bridge. They changed their course, and some time afterwards a cry came out of the frozen woods. It was rather a bark than a howl, and Tom's nerves tingled, because he knew it was a wolf's hunting call. A minute or two later he heard another, from a different part of the bush, and Steve quickened his pace. Tom found it hard to keep up, but it was unthinkable that he should drop behind.

There was silence for a time, and then the snarling cries began again. Steve, who said nothing, walked faster, and Tom laboured on behind him, breathing hard. The worst was that one could not run; but, after all, there would be no use in running if the wolves were hunting them. But this was absurd; the timber wolves never attacked a man. He heard nothing more, but began to feel that the quietness was worse than the noise. Steve was gasping, and Tom tried to calculate how far the camp was off, but gave it up. The main thing was to get on. Then, to his surprise, Steve stopped.

'It's the meat that put them on our trail,' he said, in a curious tone. 'Didn't see why I should give them my venison and live on salt pork, and if they're after *us*, it wouldn't stop them long. Well, if they want the meat, they've got to fight for it.'

It was stern logic, but Tom saw its force. If the brutes meant to overtake them, they could not escape, but one would not have expected this coolness from a man who owned to being afraid of wolves. Steve, however, threw down the buck and went on sixty or seventy yards to a big fallen trunk.

'Now,' he resumed, 'you hustle for the camp and bring the boys.'

For a moment Tom set his lips, and then forced himself to the hardest choice he had ever made.

'I won't!'

Steve, who did not seem to hear, took out some cartridges, and Tom tried to pull himself together as he looked about. It was obvious that Steve had chosen the position well. The bush was thin, there was a nearly open space between them and the deer, and the moon, which was behind them, shone into the openings between the trees. Then the trunk they stood behind slanted upwards, so that it made a kind of breastwork and would support the rifles; one shot well from a rest. Tom, however, felt that the carcase of the buck was the most important feature. It was the fresh meat the wolves had scented first, but they had no doubt scented, and would soon see, him and Steve. If they seized the venison, it would show that they had lost their fear of man.

Tom remembered a picture of a combat with wild beasts in the amphitheatre at Rome. He had disliked the picture, which hinted at too much. Now he knew what the Christian prisoners felt before the spectacle began. It looked as if he were going to play their part: only he had a good modern rifle and was glad he had learned to shoot. The trouble was that one could not keep the sights steady unless one controlled one's nerves, and his numbed fingers trembled. Steve felt the slide of his rifle cylinder, to see if it was full, and then turned to him.

'I'd 'most forgotten you. If you hustle, you might reach the choppers' shack while I get busy.'

'I mightn't,' Tom replied, with an effort at firmness. 'Anyway, I'm not going.'

Steve said nothing more, but his look puzzled Tom. The man was marked by a strange, grim calm. He was certainly not afraid, which was comforting, but the lad felt a horrible strain. They had, however, not long to wait. In the middle of a deep silence, a grey, furtive object stole out of the forest and slipped back. Another appeared, and then a third, but they did not advance. It looked as if the brutes were hesitating, but one snarled, and a fourth came out of the shadow, moving swiftly and silently. Then there was a crash, a streak of gauzy smoke drifted past, and while the echoes leapt from tree to tree one of the flitting shapes rolled over and clawed at the snow.

'That's for B'tise!' said Steve.

Tom felt his rifle-butt jar his shoulder before he knew he had fired, although he had dimly seen a running object behind the sights. He could not tell if the bullet had reached it, because the smoke was in his eyes. But Pete said: 'Under a hundred yards draw a fine bead.'

Then a train of sparks blazed out, and there was a heavy report, for a ·44-70 Winchester makes some

noise. Tom heard Steve's rifle, though he could not hear his own. He saw the muzzle jerk and felt a jar; then he snapped down the lever and pushed in another cartridge. But this was all; he could not tell if he had hit or not. (*Concluded on page* 186.)

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 158.)

THE two boys searched the room thoroughly, but quite vainly, for any means of escape. There was only one tiny window, high above the courtyard, and strongly barred as well. The door was low and very narrow and massive—probably of great age. It was secured by an enormous key, which Abbas carried fastened to his leather waistbelt; for it was Abbas who had been appointed their gaoler. The Jew boy was not at all unkind in his way. Besides the flat cakes and unpleasant, saffron-soaked mutton, he would bring them fruit—oranges, or dates, or a bunch of raisins; also sweetmeats, very sticky and cloying, which Dick and Sandy ate greedily at first, until in the end the very sight of the pink and yellow slabs made them feel sick. But, indeed, after a few weeks in that close, fœtid atmosphere they rarely wanted to eat at all; their healthy boyish appetites quite vanished, and Sandy's eyes seemed more than ever to be many sizes too big for his face. Dick, being stronger, suffered rather less in body, but in mind he was even more wretched than his younger brother. He felt responsible for Sandy—began to see, or think he saw, that every day he grew a little paler and thinner.

The boys had only one occupation during these weeks, but very possibly that saved their lives, or at least their senses. It began on the very first day of their imprisonment, when Abbas arrived after breakfast, carrying a square of black-painted wood and a piece of chalk. Squatting down upon his heels, he scrawled a few curious characters upon the board and pointed to his work triumphantly.

'Garçon!' he exclaimed in his atrocious French, and touched each of the boys in turn; then once more indicated what he had written, repeating over and over again something which sounded like 'Wolla-wolla!'

'What does he mean, I wonder?' said Dick, perplexedly. 'That writing looks a bit like shorthand, doesn't it?'

'I do believe it's the writing of the language they talk,' Sandy remarked, with a sudden inspiration. 'Arabic, I s'pose it is... Dick, I'm pretty sure he's trying to teach us what "boy" is—"garçon," you know.'

Sandy's suggestion very soon proved to be quite correct. Directly Dick, pointing first to the writing and then to himself, repeated 'Wolla-wolla!' Abbas seemed beside himself with delight. He nodded his head violently up and down, grinning and clapping his hands with glee; then passed the slate to the boys and intimated that they should copy the Arabic characters several times. This word thoroughly learnt, he passed on straightway to another, and before the Jew boy left them that morning Dick and Sandy had learnt by heart some twenty or thirty Arabic terms. The lesson was repeated on the next and each succeeding day, and the boys came to look forward to this hour or two of study more than they would have believed possible.

'Just fancy, *wanting* to do lessons!' Sandy remarked, ruefully. 'It's only because there's simply nothing else to do.'

That was just it. The monotony and tedium of their life would have been insupportable without those lessons—at least, the tough tussle with a difficult language exercised their brains, if not their bodies.

Dick begged Abbas to leave the blackboard and lump of chalk with them, and for hours at a time they practised what he had already taught them, until they began to exhaust the young Jew's stock of French, which naturally limited their acquirements in Arabic. After that they had recourse to signs and to roughly-drawn pictures, for which he supplied them with the Moorish names. For Abbas was even more eager to teach than the boys were to learn, as they very soon saw. He seemed almost feverishly anxious that they should progress rapidly, and the same feeling was noticeable in the old Jew, his father.

Levi rarely visited them, although his hideous old wife sometimes assisted Abbas to bring their meals. However, one day the Jew appeared towards the end of a lesson and listened intently as Dick and Sandy stumbled through some Arabic sentences, wagging his dirty beard in high approval. Afterwards he spoke to them with such excited rapidity that they could not understand a word, but the old fellow seemed quite satisfied, and retired, rubbing his hands gleefully.

'I wonder why they're so frightfully keen for us to learn the beastly language?' Sandy speculated listlessly, after Abbas had gone on that occasion.

'I expect they want to make us into servants or something,' Dick suggested. 'Perhaps sell things in one of those funny little shops. Abbas does—he told me so. And, of course, we should be no good at all until we could talk a bit of Arabic.'

'Do you really think that's what they're driving at?' Sandy sat up with renewed interest. 'I say, Dick, I'd rather like that! Think how jolly it would be to get outside again—out of this hateful, smelly hole. I don't mind selling things; I think it would be rather sport, don't you?'

'It wouldn't help us to find Father or the money for his ransom, though,' said Dick slowly; and then, noting how the younger boy's face fell, he added, 'Never mind, Sandy. Anyway, if they let us out of this room, we shall have much more chance of escaping, so the quicker we learn Arabic the better, I do believe.'

'I'd give anything for a run—a real good run,' Sandy said, wistfully. 'I'm sure my legs are going absolutely as stiff as pokers with not being used. Why, we have been here more than a month already.'

The thought of a possible release from their prison filled the younger boy's mind, and next day he broached the subject to Abbas, asking in broken French and Arabic, if they would be allowed to go to the bazaars with him when they could speak the Moorish language.

Their hopes were disappointed. The Jew lad shook his head violently and persistently, giving them to understand that there was some quite different object in teaching them Arabic. What that object was he could not, or would not say, and the very mystery made it alarming to the disappointed boys.

For their faint hope of better things was substituted a new dread, and it made Dick's vague plans of escape

"'That writing looks a bit like shorthand.'"

ake on a firmer and more definite shape. 'We can't stay here,' he said, decidedly. 'We must somehow get away. It's not only ourselves—it's Father.'

And that argument was one which carried immense weight with both boys. From this moment, they planned and planned, and spent hours in thinking out schemes of escape, all of which turned out to have some big flaw in them.

(*Continued on page* 171.)

NEIGHBOURS.

THERE'S a flutter and a fuss among the people of the Pond—
It's early for the children to have left their feather pillows—
You wonder what the trouble is? Just cast a glance beyond,
And you'll find it—in the gentleman who sojourns at the Willows.
For the noisy Quacker family and quiet Mr. Grey
Are not at all good neighbours, I am greatly grieved to say.

I do not quite remember how this enmity began;
But 'You're never safe from Mr. Grey: he's spying and he's staring,'
Mrs. Quacker says, 'I never knew so timesome a man.
As if the Pond belonged to him! So rude and overbearing!'
And 'Come away, my darlings!' cries the lady, in a fuss,
'It's really most impertinent the way he stares at us!'

And as for Mrs. Quacker! Supercilious Mr. Grey
Says, 'A silly, noisy creature, with her cackle and her clatter,
And her shouting to the children to be quick and come away,
If I only show my whiskers! Oh, of course, it doesn't matter!
But such vulgar neighbours bore me. I shall really have to move
Very shortly from the Willows; their manners don't improve!'

WEATHER PROPHETS.

THE only certain thing about the weather is its uncertainty. Some creatures, however, by their actions give us a fairly good idea of what we may expect. One of the best of these weather prophets is the spider. He is very sensitive to every change in the weather. Such changes are of importance to him, because of their influence upon winged insects, in whose habits, as we know so well, Mr. Spider takes a keen interest. He knows that these insects will not come out in wet weather, so when we see him resting we may expect rain. But if he is busily spinning a new web—preparing a new 'parlour' for his victims to walk into—*that* is a sign of approaching fine weather. The spider is seldom mistaken.

Bees, also, are little barometers. When they fly far away from their hives, they give us notice that fine weather is likely to continue for some time.

The screeching of owls is not a pleasant sound, but it is one that has a pleasant meaning in bad weather, for it tells us that a change for the better is at hand.

THE MAN WITH TWO THUMBS.

DURING the American Civil War a company of Virginian soldiers was encamped in the neighbourhood of Mrs. S——'s home. This lady was noted for her kind deeds. One day, as she was driving past the camp, she saw a sick soldier lying by the roadside. Stopping her carriage, she had a little sympathetic talk with him, and while doing so noticed that he had two thumbs on each hand.

Mrs. S——, when she reached her home, could not forget the poor man who had seemed so very ill. Though at that time provisions of all kinds were exceedingly scarce, she resolved to send him a share of the food that she had in the house.

As she did not know the man's name (which she had not thought to ask), she wrote on a card fastened to the cover of her filled basket these words: '*For the soldier with two thumbs.*'

The lady sent the basket of food to the camp by a trusted negro, to whom she gave careful instruc ions. He was to be sure to give it to the man with two thumbs. But Mrs. S—— forgot to add '*on each hand.*'

The negro went on horseback, and returned very quickly.

His mistress was surprised. 'How did you manage to find the man so soon?' she asked.

'He was de first one I saw,' replied Sam. 'I was going 'long, and a soldier asked me what I had got in dat basket, and I told him a chicken and things for de man with two thumbs, and he say he was de one, and so I give him de basket.'

'Did he have two thumbs on each hand?' asked the lady.

'Well,' answered Sam, 'he didn't say anything 'bout where he had them; he just say he had got two thumbs.'

And no one could say that Sam had not carried out his instructions! E. D.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 155.)

THE two tables filled up. Jimmy found a seat at the bottom of one of them, and Pilling, coming in rather late, sat next to him at the end of the table, with a boy named Paget on the other side. Paget was one of the half-dozen who had not yet got a room. The other four, who all sat near, were Bradgate, Mayfield, Hepburn, and Kindersley. Mayfield was the senior of them, but the place he had taken in the school was considerably below Jimmy's. Indeed, all these youngest boys were in the Third Form, while Jimmy had been placed in Lower Fourth.

Pilling, who showed himself friendly to Jimmy, pointed out his future companions of the dormitory, and gave more or less lurid accounts of their characters, which they received amiably as an agreeable form of 'rotting.'

'Mayfield is boss of the dormitory,' said Pilling. 'He's the only one of the lot that washes behind the ears. That's why he was chosen.'

'It wasn't,' said Mayfield. 'I'm highest up in the school, and I'm next in for a room.'

'Henshaw is a form higher than you,' said Pilling, 'and he'll be next in for a room, I should think, even though he's a term late. There's going to be a vacancy pretty soon, because Taylor will die of heart disease in about five minutes if he goes on stuffing at the rate he's doing now.'

'All right, Pills, I'll see to you later on,' said Taylor, from a little higher up the table. 'I suppose Henshaw will be boss of the dormitory now, won't he?'

'No, he won't,' said Mayfield. 'We've all been here a term, and he has only just come.'

'Are you going to let yourself be bossed by a little scug like Mayfield, Henshaw?' asked Pilling; 'or are you going to fight for it? Nobody appoints the boss of the dormitory, you know. He appoints himself.'

'He doesn't—he's elected,' said Bradgate. 'We elected Mayfield.'

'That was only because Mayfield wasn't man enough to elect himself,' said Pilling. 'I should down Mayfield if I were you, Henshaw, and put myself in his place.'

Jimmy considered this, looking round at the five boys who were to be his companions in the hall and in the dormitory. 'What does the boss of the dormitory have to do?' he asked cautiously.

'Well, he's got to be boss, that's all,' said Pilling. 'He tells the others to shut up talking when he's ready to go to sleep, and turfs them out of bed if they don't get up in time in the morning.'

'I think I could do that all right,' said Jimmy modestly.

'Then you'll take it on?' suggested Taylor.

'Yes, I think I will,' said Jimmy, with another look round.

The matter came to a head when the six boys found themselves in the dormitory together at nine o'clock. Jimmy had been fairly busy since tea-time. He had been interviewed by the matron about his clothes, had been sent for to be introduced to Mrs. Stanhope, had spent half an hour with Pilling in the room which he shared with a boy called Scott, and had attended prayers in the hall. During this time the other dormitory boys had kept studiously aloof from him, but he could tell by the way they were putting their heads together, and the looks they threw at him, that they were preparing trouble for him. He felt rather exhilarated by these signs. He was determined to take his proper place in the school, and in the House, from the first, and his place was obviously above that of boys of the Third Form. If he had come to Whyborough at the proper time, that would have been recognised. As it was, it rested with him to make it clear, and if he had to fight for it—well, it would give him something interesting to do.

He went upstairs behind the rest, and none of them spoke to him until they got into the dormitory and the door was shut behind them. Then Mayfield turned to him and said, 'Look here, young Henshaw, none of us are going to stand cheek from a new fellow, and if you don't know how to behave we're going to teach you.'

'All right,' said Jimmy. 'How are you going to begin?'

'We're going to duck your head in a basin of water till you've had enough of it. That's to begin with.'

'It seems a pretty rotten way of going to work,' said Jimmy. 'I thought people at Whyborough were all sportsmen, even chaps in the Third Form. Mr. Spedding told me they were in his time.'

'What do you mean by that?' asked Mayfield.

And Hepburn said, 'Whatever he means by it, it's cheek, and I vote we duck him now, and don't wait for any more of it.'

'Five against one,' said Jimmy. 'When I'm boss of this dormitory I'll stop that sort of scuggery.'

'Scuggery' was a Whyborough word used to indicate anything unsportsmanlike. Jimmy had learnt it from Mr. Spedding, and it had its effect on the other boys, as making him more one of themselves than he had hitherto appeared.

'You're not going to be boss of the dormitory,' said Mayfield. 'The cheek of it!'

'Yes, I am,' said Jimmy; 'I'm boss of it now.' And he moved towards his bed and began to take off his jacket.

There was a pause. Jimmy produced another speech before anybody else had time to say anything. 'You're a set of dirty little scugs,' he said. 'Fancy taking all the evening to settle that you were all going for me together! It's quite time I came here, to teach you how to behave yourselves.'

Paget spoke next. He was a nice-looking boy, whom Jimmy had picked out as the best of the bunch, though he was the smallest of all of them. 'It's quite true what he says—that it's scuggish for five fellows to go for one,' he said. 'Still, it's beastly cheek for a new fellow to come and calmly tell us that he's going to boss us.'

'If you think it over, my young friend,' said Jimmy, 'you'll see that it isn't cheek at all. It wasn't my fault I didn't come here last term. If I had done, I should have had a room, and shouldn't have been in dormitory at all. Of course I'm going to be boss, but I shan't be hard on you if you behave yourselves. I say, what sort of fellow is Williams? I've got to fag for him.'

'You won't cheek Williams,' said Kindersley hotly; 'or if you do, you won't do it twice. It wouldn't be a bad thing, you fellows, to leave him to Williams, and see how he likes that.'

Jimmy gathered that the idea of a combined ducking of his head in a basin was a danger that was now past, and chuckled to himself at having made so much headway. 'Yes, I should do that if I were you,' he said, by way of ending the matter. 'Whatever you do, you're not going to duck my head in a basin. I might catch cold.'

Paget laughed. 'He's got the cheek of a monkey,' he said.

'You needn't think we're going to let you be boss, though,' said Mayfield. 'You've got me to settle with first.'

Jimmy turned on him sharply. 'All right,' he said. 'Then let's settle now.'

He had his coat and waistcoat off. He was a well-made boy, though his illness had pulled him down, and he was thinner than he ought to have been. Mayfield was a good deal more sturdy in build than Jimmy would have been even if he had been at his best, though perhaps not more muscular for his weight. If they had come to a fight, it was not by any means certain that Jimmy would have got the best of it.

But Jimmy did not have to fight with his fists on his first evening at Whyborough, though he fought with them afterwards. Mayfield was no coward, physically, but he had not been prepared to fight with Jimmy: his blood was not up, and the sudden challenge took him by surprise. 'I don't want to have a scrap with you, if that's what you mean,' he said, rather sulkily; 'but you're not going to take my place here.'

Directly he had said it, he must have realised that his place was no longer his.

Jimmy turned away unconcernedly. 'If you won't fight for it,' he said, 'of course you can't be boss any longer.' And it was made plain in some indefinable way by the attitude of the other boys that this was accepted.

'Oh, let's chuck it!' said Hepburn. 'As Henshaw is in Lower Fourth, I suppose he's really got the right to be boss of the dormitory as long as he's in it. It doesn't make much difference, anyhow.'

But as Jimmy lay in bed, after he had ordered conversation to cease, as he had done by right of his new office, he knew that it made a great deal of difference. He had already made up something that he had lost by missing a term at Whyborough, and would make up the rest all in good time. He thought of his mother and sister before he fell asleep, but it was not with the sinking of heart that he had felt during the day. He was going to enjoy his life at Whyborough.

(*Continued on page* 174.)

"'All right,' he said. 'Then let's settle now.'"

"Chanceler saluted and paid his duty to the Emperor."

THE MUSCOVY MERCHANTS.

England's First Friendship with Russia.

II.—THE FROZEN SEAS.

(*Concluded from page* 159.)

A FEW mariners, who were grievously oppressed by the cold, which at times made them faint when they came up suddenly from below decks, were left in charge of the ship at the bay where Chanceler had landed. The rest set out with Chanceler upon sledges, the people of the country escorting them on horseback. They had not gone far when they met the Emperor's messenger who had gone astray. He had at last found the right way, and bore with him letters of welcome from the Tsar, Ivan Basilivitch—Ivan the Terrible. These letters were full of kindness and courtesy, and gave express command that post-horses should be got for Chanceler and his company at the Emperor's charges. So willing were the Russians to carry out this command that they began to quarrel and even to fight in striving which of them should put their post-horses to the sledges.

So they journeyed through this strange new land, seeing great plains of snow, dark forests, broad deep rivers; bears, black wolves, and a few scattered houses of rough wood. In the bay where Chanceler had landed was the town of Kholmogori.* They went by the shores of the Dwina, and thence south to Vologda and Jaroslav. As they drew nearer to Moscow, the land grew richer. There were great stores of corn, and wheatfields, and many villages: they saw often seven or eight hundred sleds in a morning, all carrying corn, or fish from the many rivers, to Moscow, some even from a thousand miles away, from the extreme of the land where the climate would let the grain grow.

And thus at last, after fifteen hundred miles of journey, they came to the chief city of Muscovy, Moscow.† It had a great 'castle,' bounded by the river Don, and seemingly impregnable, with brick walls eighteen feet thick, and nine churches within its bounds. But all the buildings of the city seemed to the Englishmen low and small and uncouth. The greater part were built of wood, 'very dangerous for fire.'

The Englishmen were received into a suitable lodging, and courteously entertained. There they abode twelve days, awaiting the Tsar's pleasure. At the end of that time word came that the Emperor's wish was to have them come before him with their King's letters. They were very ready so to do, and were led to the Emperor's Palace, which lay within the 'Castle.' It was a four-square building, low in height: far surpassed, it seemed to the Englishmen, by the houses of the Kings of England. The windows were narrow, some latticed, some filled with glass. Within, the walls were plain, not hung with cloth of gold as in England. Along the walls were benches, built into the wall: this they found was a custom in all Russian houses.

When they came into the Tsar's anteroom they found there awaiting them a hundred or more gentlemen, all in cloth of gold, 'very sumptuous.' They were taken thence into the Council Chamber, where sat the Emperor himself with his nobles. They sat round the chamber, on a daïs; but the Emperor himself was raised above them all in a very royal gilt chair, wearing a long garment of beaten gold, with an imperial crown upon his head, and a staff of crystal and gold and precious stones in his right hand. There was in his face a majesty suited to his estate. On one hand stood his chief Secretary, on the other his Chancellor, 'the great commander of silence,' both in cloth of gold, as likewise were the counsellors all round.

This great majesty and assembly might very well have amazed the Englishmen and dashed them out of countenance; but Chanceler, nothing dismayed, saluted and paid his duty to the Emperor, in the English manner, and delivered to him the letters of King Edward VI. Thereupon the Tsar took the letters and read them, and began to question the strangers, through an interpreter, and to ask them about the welfare and commonweal of their kingdom. They answered him directly, in few words, and presented gifts, through the Secretary, who in delivering them took off the hat which he had been wearing. Then the Emperor invited them to dinner, and dismissed them from his presence.

They went forth and stayed for two hours in the chamber of the Master of Requests to the Emperor. Then a messenger came to call them to dinner. They were conducted into the Golden Court ('so they call it, although it is not very fair'), and found there the Emperor, sitting upon a high and stately seat, apparelled in a robe of silver, with a new diadem on his head. The Englishmen were placed opposite him, and sat down. On each side of the hall were four tables laid for a feast, and filled with the assembly of those present. The guests were clad in linen without and rich skins beneath. In the midst was a cupboard, or table of shelves, mounting up to a point, each step narrower than the one below. On this was placed the Emperor's plate, which was so much that the cupboard was scarcely able to sustain the weight of it. The better part of all the vessels and goblets was of very fine gold, among them four 'marvellous great pots' at least five feet high, of gold and silver. By the cupboard stood two gentlemen with napkins on their shoulders, and in their hands each of them had a cup of gold set with pearls and precious stones, which were the Tsar's own drinking-cups. When he was disposed he drank them off at a draught.

The Englishmen were royally feasted, and they remembered the new customs that they saw. Before the carrying in of the meat the Emperor himself first bestowed a piece of bread upon every one of his guests, with a loud pronouncement of his title and honour, and these words: 'The great Duke of Muscovy, and chief Emperor of Russia, Ivan Basilivitch'—and here an officer named the guest—'doth give thee bread.' At that the guest rose up and took the bread, and sat down. When this was done the Gentleman Usher of the Hall came in, with a notable company of servants carrying dishes, and, having done reverence to the Emperor, he put a young swan in a golden platter upon the table ceremoniously, and immediately took it thence again, giving it to the carver and seven underlings to be cut up. In the meantime the Gentleman Usher received bread from the Emperor, and tasted it, and having done a reverence, departed.

All the plate for this feast was of pure gold; and there

* Beyond Archangel, in the same inlet of the White Sea. The Dwina is the northern river of the two so named.

† There was then no Petrograd. The Tsar Peter the Great, who founded Petrograd, was not born till over a hundred years later.

were one hundred and forty servants attending, all in cloth of gold, who changed their raiment thrice in the time of dinner. When the feasting was done the Emperor called all his nobles each by name and spoke to each of his own affairs.

When all was ended the Englishmen went to their lodging, and of the rest of their stay in Muscovy they say little. The Tsar gave them letters to King Edward VI. (who was dead, though they did not know it), giving to Englishmen, subjects of King Edward, leave to enter the ports of Muscovy and treat with the merchants of the country. 'They shall have their free mart, with all free liberties through my whole dominions, with all kinds of wares, to come and go at their pleasure.' This letter was written on paper with a broad seal of wax, on which on one side was the image of a man in complete harness fighting with a dragon, like the Great Seal of England.

So, their great business being well ended, Chanceler and his men went back to their ship, having found for England a new friendship and a new road of adventure. When the winter was passed they sailed back to England, hearing no tidings of their lost comrades, and came safely home in the year of our Lord 1554.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 164.)

AFTER all, the plan which, in the end, the brothers decided to attempt was about the simplest of all. Sandy thought of it after Abbas had brought them their supper one night. They were sitting cross-legged on the floor in native fashion to eat it, and the younger boy looked distastefully at the unpleasant little fish floating in oil, and the pale, anæmic-looking cakes.

'Doesn't seem to be much need to have a light for this,' he said, for Dick was manipulating the queer, old-fashioned-looking earthenware lamp, with its wick floating in grease. 'It's the same old thing—that beast, Abbas, hasn't brought us any fruit or anything for weeks and weeks.'

'No, he doesn't seem to care much if we're alive or dead,' Dick said, bitterly. 'This evening he didn't even look to see if we were in the room—dumping down the tray in the dark like that, as if we were lions and tigers at the Zoo! Why, we might have been *gone*, for anything he knew or cared.'

'Yes, we might have been gone.' Sandy repeated the words slowly, then leant forward and clutched at Dick's sleeve so suddenly that he almost upset the unappetising food. 'We might have been gone—why shouldn't we have been gone, Dick—really?'

'What do you mean?' Dick bit his lips and frowned, unable to follow the other boy's rapid thoughts.

'Why, Abbas just comes in in the dark, as you said, and puts the tray down over here, but . . . he leaves the door open while he does it.'

'I see . . . you mean . . . you mean . . .' Dick began slowly.

'I mean, why shouldn't we slip out in that minute while the door's open? The stairs are all dark—I have noticed that. Dick, I don't believe he'd see that we'd gone; I believe he would just lock the door, and never know anything about it till he brought our breakfast next morning, if we slipped down the stairs ever so softly. . . . Oh, Dick, I do want to try! Don't, please, say it's no good!'

But Dick said nothing of the sort. On the contrary, it seemed to him that the plan might be very well worth trying, and they decided, if all went well, to make the attempt the very next evening.

During the whole of the following day a great restlessness and impatience possessed the two boys, which they could hardly hide from Abbas when he came to give them their usual lesson. They longed for evening to come, and yet dreaded the moment when they would be obliged to risk the great attempt which meant so much.

Not very many preparations were possible, or necessary, for Levi had kept their clothes. The loss of the little book was a great trouble to them, but it was of no use to think of trying to get it out of the old Jew's clutches; and on the whole they fancied they could trust to their memories for all the directions to find the pit where their ancestor had been imprisoned. During the weary hours spent in the hold of the *Sea Rover* they had learnt the narrative almost by heart.

Dusk fell, but not quickly enough to satisfy Dick and Sandy. They dreaded that Abbas might bring their meal before the room was quite dark enough to conceal their movements. But he did not come until the shadows had filled every corner, and only the little barred window showed as a luminous blur.

It seemed hours that the boys waited in the darkness, crouching together, cold and sick with suspense and excitement, before they heard the young Jew's shuffling step on the stairs.

'Creep over quite close to the door, Sandy,' Dick whispered, 'and slip out the instant he has passed you. I will stay more in the middle of the room, so as to answer if he speaks.'

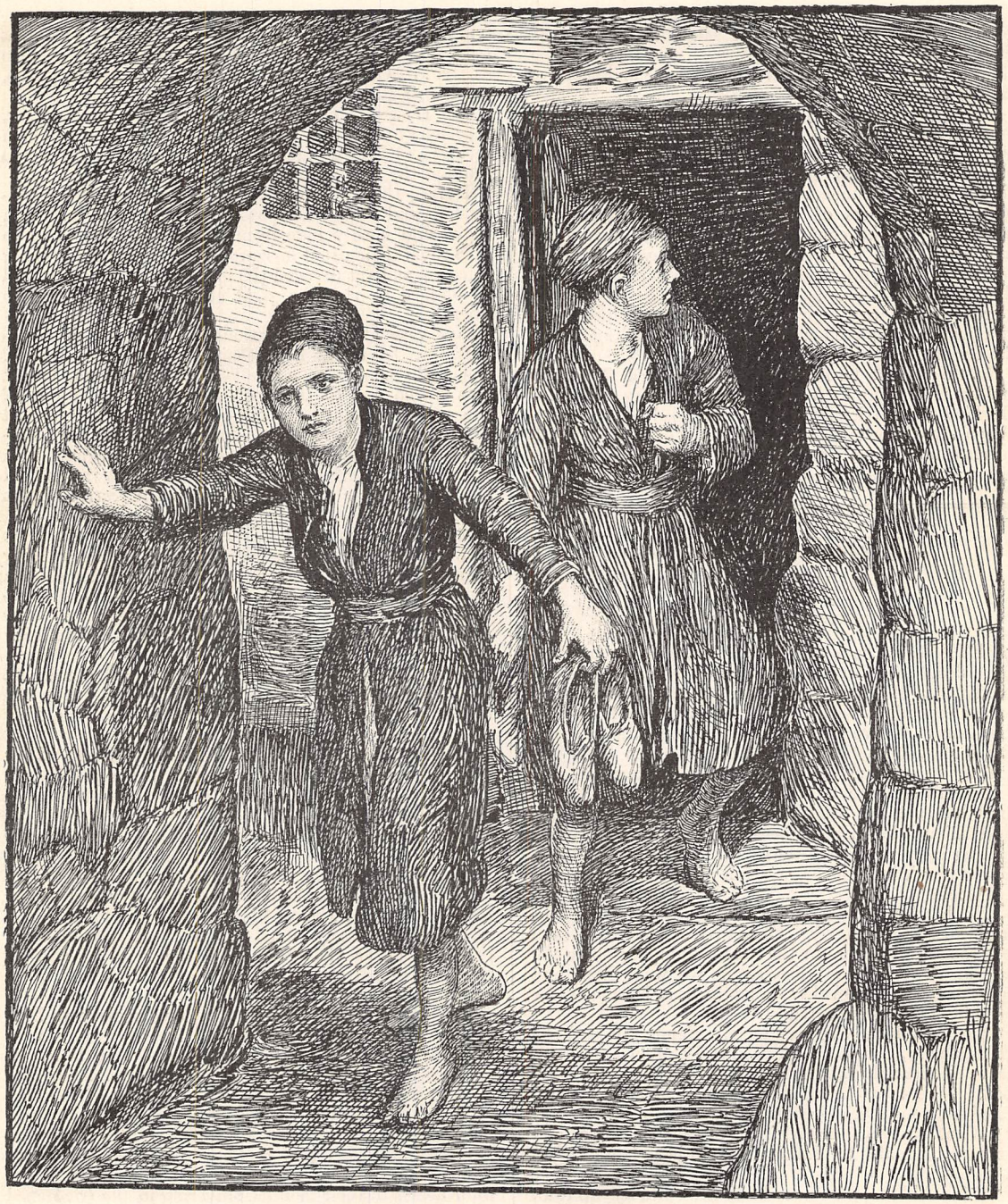
The younger boy obeyed, stepping barefooted, and carrying his native slippers, so that his footfalls should make no sound on the dirty boards.

The key grated in the lock, and the heavy door swung open noisily on its rusty hinges. In the gloom Sandy waited breathlessly until Abbas had passed him, grunting under the weight of the tray he carried, then glided noiselessly out on to the dark and filthy staircase.

He heard the young Jew make some remark to Dick in his villainous French, heard his brother answer carelessly in Arabic, with a yawn and a little laugh, and frankly admired the elder boy's self-command.

Then Sandy heard the jangle and clatter of the tray as it was set down upon the floor, and Abbas' guttural good-night. At the same instant, quick breathing and a muffled footstep told the boy that Dick was close beside him. Together they slipped down the stairs, their hearts in their mouths, shivering in the frightened expectation of a creaking board or a miscalculated step.

But luck favoured the boys at last. They reached the bottom of the stairs and paused to listen. Above them, they heard the creak and jar of the closing door, the grind of the turning key. Abbas believed that he had locked them in as usual, and proceeded to return



"Dick and Sandy slipped along . . . through the archway into the street"

down the stairs, singing a monotonous native chant in his cracked, unpleasant voice.

Along the passage and through the doorway into the courtyard the boys fled. Above them was a square of dusky, starlit sky, and in some of the windows lights burnt. But no living creature was to be seen as Dick and Sandy slipped along the side of the enclosure, keeping close to the wall.

Through the archway into the street—and at last Dick ventured to speak in a whisper, drawing a long breath: 'Sandy, I do believe we're safe,' he said.

(*Continued on page* 182.)

SYMPATHY.

Engraved on Wood after the Picture by Briton Rivière, R.A., D.C.L.

(*By Permission.*)

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate, etc., etc.

(Continued from page 167.)

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN Jimmy had been at Whyborough for a week he wondered how he could ever have felt any dread about his introduction to school life. It all seemed now as familiar to him as if he had always known it. He was of an inquiring disposition, and made himself familiar with every nook and corner of the school and the school grounds, except such places as were not open to the profane gaze of a lower boy. He knew the ways of the school, and what might be done by different classes of boys—Prefects, boys in the Elevens, 'swells' generally, sub-prefects, boys of the Middle and Lower Schools, fags, and all the rest of them—and was not likely to make any mistakes as to his own privileges, which were as yet small. He had also made a good many friends, and amongst them was Pilling, as the chief. But he could not yet count Henderson as an intimate friend, though Henderson was always friendly, and he had hopes that by-and-by they would come closer together.

He enjoyed his life, but there were several things that prevented his enjoying it as much as he would have liked to. For one thing, he was not allowed to play football, which went on for about half the term, until practice for the Sports took its place as the regular occupation in the Fields. He felt this very much. It was not only that he badly wanted to play for the sake of the game itself, and hated missing a whole year's practice. There was nothing else for him to do regularly. The racquet courts were not for Lower Boys, and he could not always get a game of fives, while football was being played by nearly everybody else. He had to hang about and watch matches, in company with the 'slackers,' or go for country walks, sometimes alone. And it was apt to make him considered a 'slacker' himself. It wasn't everybody who knew that it was by doctor's orders that he was not allowed to play football, and those that did know didn't much care.

Another thing was that, although he was making headway with the other boys, there were some who disliked him and were inclined to make his life somewhat of a burden to him. One of these was Norman, or the Conqueror, but of him we can tell later. Jimmy had been fixed as a 'cocky young ass' at an early date. The story of his having imposed himself as Boss of his dormitory on the first evening of his arrival had got about, and while there were some who were amused by it, there were others who thought that he had shown a great deal too much cheek for a new boy. Perhaps he did possess rather more cheek than is altogether agreeable in a young boy, and used it too much to gain himself the position that he felt to be his by right. At any rate, it earned him the dislike of boys like Norman, who relied on much the same quality to make themselves felt, since they could not do much in games, and would have been thought little of if they had not asserted themselves.

But these troubles were nothing compared with the burden that his fag-master, Williams, made of his life during the time he was with him. At the end of a week of it Jimmy had come to the conclusion that something must be done to stop it, or his pleasure in school life would be spoilt altogether.

Somehow, from what had been said to him of Williams, Jimmy had got it into his head that Williams was a hulking bully of the sort that is met with more commonly in old-fashioned school stories than in actual public-school life of to-day. He knew that he was in both Elevens, so he was considerably surprised, when he first saw Williams, to find him a medium-sized, fair-haired boy, with a gentle voice and a manner that seemed to indicate that butter would not have melted in his mouth. He spoke very nicely to Jimmy, and said that he was glad to have him as his fag instead of Kindersley, who was about as much use as a sick-headac e. Then he asked Jimmy very kindly if he minded keeping his room very tidy for him, for the servants were no good at that sort of thing. Of course, Jimmy said that he would, glad enough to be able to do something to please so amiable a person, and much relieved at finding him so different from what he had expected.

Williams's room was better furnished even than Bertram's, though it was not so big. He seemed to have more money at his command than most schoolboys, or at any rate to be able to get things that most schoolboys are quite content to do without. His chairs were covered with beautiful cretonnes, and he had a pair of handsome curtains over his window. He had a great many ornaments and pictures, and had brought back several more, which Jimmy helped him to arrange on the first evening of his arrival.

Williams said that he should like to re-arrange all his pictures, so as to get the new ones into the best places; and Jimmy went down to the town to buy picture-wire and other requisites for him. Then they set to work. Jimmy did most of it, and Williams sat in his easy chair and directed him. He explained that he would have preferred to do it all himself, but could get at the idea better if he sat and looked on. Jimmy didn't mind in the least, though all his spare time that evening was taken up, and he had wanted to write fully about his first day to his mother and sister. Williams was difficult to please, and what was done often had to be altered and done afresh. But he was so nice about it, and apologised so pleasantly for giving Jimmy so much extra trouble, that Jimmy worked with a will to please him.

When he was doing something that did not need direction for the moment, Williams talked to him about the school, or about all sorts of other things. Jimmy told him that he hoped to get on well in cricket, and be in the Eleven some day, and Williams encouraged him in the idea, and said it was what every boy who was naturally a good cricketer ought to hope for. He said he gathered from what Jimmy had told him that he *was* naturally a cricketer, and Jimmy said that Mr. Spedding had told him that he was. Then Williams asked him about his home, and Jimmy told him a lot of things that he had never supposed he would tell any boy, because Williams was so nice about it, and said that he hoped he would have the pleasure of meeting Jimmy's mother and sister some day.

At the end of the evening, when the room was finished and the mess all cleared neatly away, Williams thanked Jimmy warmly for all he had done, and said that he had never supposed he would be lucky enough to have such a splendid fag.

Jimmy went away happy, and wondering how it was

that Williams had earned the reputation of being a perfect beast as a fag-master. It must be confessed that he put it down largely to his own credit, and thought that if Kindersley had been the sort of boy that he himself was, he would not have been so glad to exchange Williams for Norris as a fag-master, as he evidently was. He, fortunately, had the sense not to buck about it in the dormitory, and when Kindersley asked him how he had got on with Williams, he simply said, 'Oh, all right, thanks.' So that when he awoke to the true state of things soon afterwards, he did not have the additional unpleasantness of being crowed over by Kindersley and the other boys.

The next morning he went into Williams's room to put it tidy, after breakfast. Williams was not there. The room was much as it had been the night before, except that the suit that Williams had worn was lying over a chair, and one or two articles of clothing were scattered about the room. Jimmy was not very clear as to exactly how far his duties as a fag extended, but it did not occur to him that he would be expected to valet Williams, so he left the clothes where they were, and, after tidying the things on a little writing-table in a corner of the room, went out.

When he came back to the House after second lesson, Kindersley met him with a grin, and said, 'Mr. Williams wants you, young fellow, and I should go pretty sharp if I were you, or you'll get into more trouble.'

Jimmy went up to Williams's room, not at all alarmed, but rather amused at Kindersley so completely misunderstanding the happy terms he was on with his fag-master.

Williams was standing by the mantelpiece when he went in. 'Didn't you promise to keep this room tidy, Henshaw?' he asked gently, but rather sadly.

'Yes,' said Jimmy; 'I did everything I could see to do this morning.'

'You don't happen to be blind, do you?' asked Williams. 'Isn't there a suit of clothes that wants brushing and folding and putting away? And aren't there a few other things that aren't generally seen in a sitting-room in the day-time?'

Jimmy didn't much like the idea of brushing and folding up somebody else's clothes, but was quite ready to do it if it was the proper thing for a fag to do. 'I'm sorry,' he said; 'I didn't know I had to do that,' and proceeded to do it.

Williams watched him carefully, and made him feel rather uncomfortable by not saying anything at all, not even when he took the jacket which he had folded up away from him, and folded it up again himself in rather a different way.

When he had finished, Williams suddenly became friendly again. 'I must say that I was rather annoyed at finding all this mess about,' he said. 'I like my room kept very tidy and like my clothes kept very tidy. But perhaps it was partly my fault for not telling you more definitely what you ought to do for me. I'm sure you want to please me, don't you, Henshaw?'

'Oh, yes,' said Jimmy, much relieved at having the feeling of tension removed.

'Very well, then. There's a little kettle here, you see. Well, on Sundays and Wednesdays I want hot water boiled in it to shave with when I get up. You must come in five minutes before the bell rings and light it. But be very careful that you don't wake me up if I'm asleep.'

'Suppose I don't wake myself?' said Jimmy.

Williams took no notice of this remark. 'That is for Sundays and Wednesdays,' he said, 'and please don't forget it. On other days I just want my clothes folded and brushed, and it will do if you come in directly the bell rings. Don't be late, please. You can go now.'

Jimmy had the sense to see directly he got out of the room that all this was a 'try on.' All the boys in the dormitory were fags, and none of them had left it that morning to do anything for their fag-masters. Besides, it was obvious that fags weren't expected to perform such duties as Williams had mentioned.

Later in the morning Kindersley said to him, 'Well, I suppose Williams told you how he wanted the studs changed in his shirt, didn't he?'

'Is that what you had to do when you fagged for him?' asked Jimmy.

'It's how he began,' said Kindersley, 'and I was ass enough to do it, till Bertram saw me going to his room in the morning and said it wasn't allowed.'

'You must have been an ass,' said Jimmy.

Kindersley looked at him not without admiration. 'You do tumble to things pretty quick,' he said. 'Well, you *may* be able to keep Williams in his place, but I doubt it. I'm jolly glad it's you, and not me any longer, anyhow.'

Williams sent for Jimmy in the afternoon, when he changed for football. 'Look here, Henshaw,' he said; 'as you're a slacker and don't have anything to do in the afternoons, I should like you to come in every afternoon after I've gone to the Fields and brush and fold my clothes ready for me to put on again. You see, I'm used to being valeted at home, and I hate doing this sort of thing myself. You don't mind, do you?'

'Yes, I do,' said Jimmy, with his heart in his mouth. 'I'll do everything that a fag ought to do, but looking after your clothes isn't one of them.'

Williams did not get angry. 'If Kindersley has told you that,' he said, 'I shall have something to say to him. Your duty as a fag is to do what I tell you. Do you understand that?'

'Kindersley told me that Bertram had stopped his coming into your room when he got up,' said Jimmy. 'That's all he told me, but I'd already thought that you must be rotting me about shaving-water and all that.'

'You seem to be a bright lad,' said Williams, still in the same amiable way. 'Well, of course, I was rotting you about that. But I expect you to come in in the afternoon, as I told you. You can stop and brush and fold these clothes now. And keep the fire in. And you might dust all these ornaments this afternoon, and tidy up generally. It will give you something to do.'

He went out of the room. Jimmy dusted the ornaments, which didn't want it, swept up the hearth and put more coal on the fire, and tidied the room. Then he went out, leaving the clothes where Williams had put them.

That had been the beginning of his troubles. At the end of a week he had not touched any of Williams's clothes, but had been treated in such a way in consequence that he had come to the conclusion, as already stated, that he could stand it no longer.

(*Continued on page* 178.)

"Jimmy did most of it, and Williams sat in his easy chair and directed him."

"Williams and Norman stopped by the side of the road to poke at some ice."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,
Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 175.)

CHAPTER V.

JIMMY went for a walk with Pilling, who was recovering from a bad cold, and had been forbidden to play football that afternoon. It was a very cold but sunny afternoon, and the tramp along the hard flat roads did both boys good. Whyborough was situated at the edge of the marsh country, and three miles away there was a big shallow lake or Broad on which the ice was expected soon to bear, if the frost continued. The boys wanted to find out if there was likely to be a chance of skating on the morrow, and made Farstead Broad the object of their walk.

Jimmy told Pilling about Williams trying to turn him into a valet, and of how he had refused.

'Funny ass!' said Pilling. 'Don't you give in to him, Henshaw. I say, have you got a pair of skates? I wrote and asked for mine two days ago. They ought to be here to-morrow.'

Jimmy saw that Pilling did not understand at all how serious the trouble between him and Williams was. 'I brought my skates with me,' he said. 'Look here, Pilling, I don't know what to do about that beast, Williams. I thought I'd tell you all about it.'

'All right, old boy, drive ahead,' said Pilling. 'He hasn't been knocking you about, has he?'

'No,' said Jimmy. 'I wish he would. I'd go for him if he did.'

'Would you? Well, you wouldn't get much out of that. What *has* he done, then?'

Jimmy did not reply immediately. If he had been older he could have explained that Williams's treatment of him had been a long series of brutal insults, much harder to bear than any 'knocking about,' under which he was all raw and sore within, and Pilling would have understood him. As it was, he hardly knew how to make a start, so as to get any sympathy at all. And it was sympathy that he really wanted, even more than advice how to act.

'He is the biggest beast I have ever come across,' he said. 'I thought he was very friendly at first, and so he was. But I think now it was only to worm things out of me, so that he could use what I said against me.'

'What sort of things?'

'Well, you know that a lot of chaps are always rotting me about my cricket.'

'Well, you have bucked about it a bit, haven't you?'

'No, I haven't. It all comes from him. He made me tell him what Mr. Spedding had said to me—that I ought to make a cricketer if I took pains about it. That was all I said. He told the Conqueror that I had said I was going to surprise everybody at cricket, and a lot of other things like that, and it was he who put it all about.'

'Well, you shouldn't have given him a handle. But of course it was pretty beastly of him if he was like that. Still, I shouldn't let it worry you.'

'I shouldn't, if that was all. I told him about my mater and sister, and about us not having much money since my father died, and living in a cottage, and all that. Now, whenever he wants to be particularly beastly, he says something about them, and about our being poor.'

'That's a scuggy thing to do. What sort of things?'

Jimmy paused. 'I hardly like to tell you,' he said. 'He always calls my sister by her Christian name, which I hate, and he says things about her and my mater going out to service, as we're poor.'

He came to an abrupt stop, with a break in his voice. Pilling threw a glance at him. 'Dirty cad!' he said indignantly; and now there was no doubt that he felt for Jimmy. 'Go on.'

Jimmy went on, more freely now that the ice was broken. There was nothing very definite to relate. Deliberate cold-blooded insults can be administered without leaving much mark on the outside, just as the worst wounds in the body are internal. Williams had set himself, with all the ingenuity of a cruel and callous nature, to hurt Jimmy's feelings. He had played with him as a cat plays with a mouse, and set every nerve in his brain quivering. But if it hadn't been for the insults to his mother and sister, which Pilling resented on his behalf, as any right-feeling boy would have done, it is doubtful whether Jimmy could have made him understand how much he had suffered.

'The fact of the matter is,' said Pilling, 'that a dirty cad like that can do you more harm with his tongue than he can with his hands. He doesn't mind what he says, and ordinary fellows can't say that sort of thing back. I should think *you* could, though, if you wanted to. You're pretty sharp with your tongue. Why don't you tell him what a cad he is?'

'Oh, I've done that all right,' said Jimmy; 'but he only laughs at it.'

'Well, of course, you couldn't say such caddish things as he does, I suppose. I should leave him alone if I were you.'

'What do you mean—not fag for him?'

'Yes. Then you'd be brought up before a Prefects' meeting, and it would come out how he had treated you. Hardly anybody likes him, you know. The other Prefects, even, are afraid of the things he says. I believe, if it was me, that's what I would do.'

'I would rather settle him myself if I could,' said Jimmy. 'I think I'll tell him, though, that I shan't fag for him any more unless he treats me decently. I say, who are those fellows ahead of us?'

Jimmy and Pilling had been walking very fast. They had just come through a wood. Beyond it lay the flat open marsh country, and they could see the gleam of Farstead Broad, a mile or so in front of them. The road ran straight towards it, and on it, some way ahead, they could see two Whyborough boys walking towards the Broad, but at a more deliberate pace than their own. When they had caught them up a little more, they saw that they were Williams and Norman.

'I suppose they're going to the Broad,' said Pilling. 'Shall we turn back, or go somewhere else?'

'No,' said Jimmy, stoutly. 'I'm not going to funk Williams. If we meet them at the Broad, you'll see what he's like.'

'Right-ho!' said Pilling. 'I'll tackle him with you, if he gives you any of his lip. I say, Henshaw, has it ever struck you that the Conqueror is training to be just such another blighter as Williams? Now you've told me what Williams is like I can see it; and of course they're great pals.'

'I hate the Conqueror,' said Jimmy. 'He thinks he's jolly clever too, but it doesn't do to take too much notice of a scug like that.'

Williams and Norman stopped by the side of the road to poke at some ice on a ditch, and Jimmy and Pilling went on towards them. When they were a hundred yards or so off, the older boys saw them, but before they reached them they went on again.

They walked at a slower pace than before, and presently Jimmy and Pilling caught them up. They pretended to take no notice of them, but instead of letting them pass they quickened their pace, and walked alongside them on the broad road.

Williams was talking. 'The thing I hate most,' he was saying, 'is that he is so dirty that I can hardly sit in the room when he's there. I did suggest that he should wash himself the other day, but he said that his mother was so poor that she couldn't afford to buy him any soap.'

'We might subscribe to get him a cake,' said Norman. 'There's another Lower boy like that.'

'It's a pity they are not brought up better,' said Williams. 'Somehow it reminds me of—— I wonder what—— Oh, dear me! here's young Master Henshaw and his friend, young Master Pilling! The Conqueror and I were just wondering how guttersnipes happened to be taking a walk at this time of day.'

'I expect it's each other that you were wondering about,' said Pilling, crudely. 'Come on, Henshaw, let's get past them.'

They quickened their pace, almost to a run, but the older boys, with their longer legs, kept up with them.

'Ah, I suppose they have to get home to their bread and dripping,' said Williams. 'As you were saying, Conqueror, this school is intended for gentlemen, and it is rather hard on those of us who are particular about the company we keep that a little guttersnipe such as I was telling you about should be sent here.'

'Is that Norman you're talking about?' asked Pilling. 'I always thought he was rather a bounder, but I didn't know he came from the gutter.' He whispered to Jimmy: 'Say something. Don't let me do it all.'

'I thought he did myself, from the way he talks,' said Jimmy.

Norman made a movement towards him. 'Look here, Henshaw,' he began angrily. But Williams broke in. 'Leave me to deal with my fag,' he said in the same quiet tone that he had used before. 'Henshaw, you are not at liberty to show your native vulgarity in my presence. You ought to be ashamed of yourself after the way I have tried to help you to behave amongst gentlemen. Think what Ruth would say, if I were to write and tell her. Dear little Ruth, who sends you her weekly penn'orth of butter-scotch, after she has had a suck at it herself. I wish I had a sister like Ruth.'

Jimmy had told him, on that first evening, how his little sister had saved up her pocket-money for weeks before he had left home, and given him a box of chocolates as an extra parting present.

'You're a dirty cad to talk like that,' he said, in much the same quiet tone as Williams himself had used; it was much more effective, coming from a fag to a Prefect, than if he had spoken hotly. It was, in fact, a challenge.

Pilling looked quickly at Williams to see how he would take it. So did Norman. Williams did not turn a hair. 'Dirty little guttersnipes have their own dirty little language,' he said. 'I expect you've found that, Conqueror. Shall we fall behind a little? We can't talk to people like this.'

(*Continued on page* 186.)

THE FOX.

THERE'S a home across the moorland,
There's a bank of purple heath,
With a gorse-bush flaming yellow
And a little cave beneath.

In that cave so dry and sandy,
Hidden out of reach of harm,
Mother Vixen keeps her children
Snugly sheltered, safe and warm.

When the workman quits his labour,
When the farmer seeks his home,
Then the foxes leave their shelter,
Then they think it time to roam.

On the quiet summer evenings,
After sleeping all the day,
In and out among the heather
Yellow cubs come out to play.

Then they gambol in the twilight
When the world is still around—
Funny little baby foxes
Tumbling, rolling on the ground.

While they play in happy freedom,
Father Fox is on the prowl
Seeking supper for his children—
Field-mice, rabbits, ducks, or fowl.

Few his friends, but great his cunning—
Soon he comes with lots of food;
Strong and tireless, he will never
Fail his eager, hungry brood.

EVA M. HAINES.

OWL STORIES.

THE other day I was reading about an owl which for ten days made its home in the cowl on a chimney, flying away each evening and coming back in the morning. Did it know how well 'cowl' rhymes with 'owl?' Probably it thought only of being nicely sheltered from the wind.

This story reminded me of another one, told to me by a woman in Birmingham. Another woman in the same street on waking one morning was greatly startled to see an owl perched on the rail at the foot of her bed. I suppose it must have flown in through the open window.

And where did it come from? Well, not far away there are some botanical gardens in which a few living creatures are kept, and the owl may have escaped from these gardens. But the woman did not go to see. The silly, superstitious people of the place said that an owl's visit is a sign of death, and when shortly afterwards a man died somewhere in the neighbourhood they of course said that the omen had 'come true.' Anyway, the coming of the owl to that house meant death for itself, for the poor creature was kept shut up there and pined away.

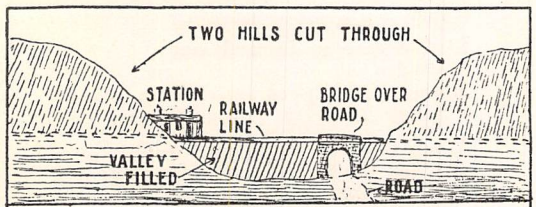
E. D.

EYES THAT SEE:

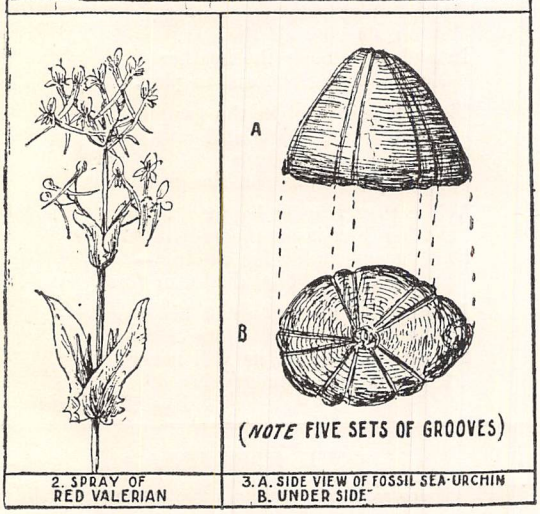
THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.

VI.—ON A RAILWAY LINE.

I HAVE often, as I looked out of the window of a railway carriage, longed that the train would stop just for a second, and let me see what this or that plant was, of which I caught a glimpse as I was flashed past. Perhaps I only got an impression of a colour, and have



1. DIAGRAM OF RAILWAY CUTTING



2. SPRAY OF RED VALERIAN

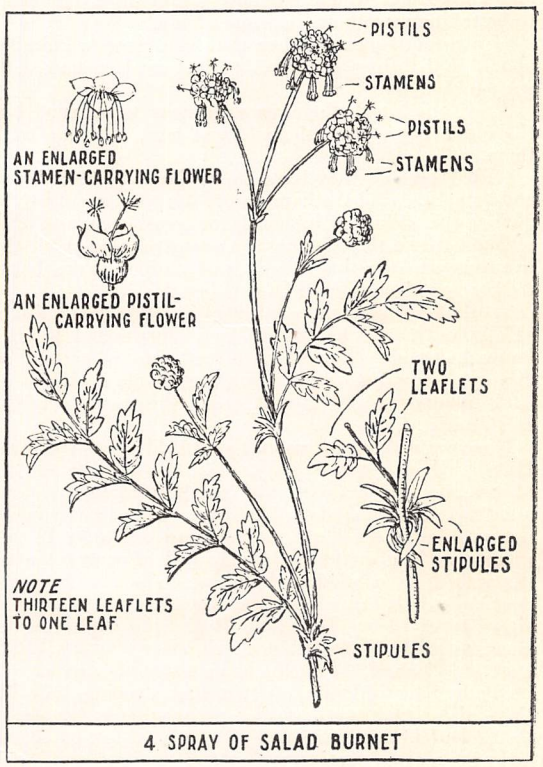
3. A. SIDE VIEW OF FOSSIL SEA-URCHIN B. UNDER SIDE

racked my brains to think what plant, in bloom at that time in the year, it could be. Railway embankments have always interested me, and I have longed to explore one, so I thought I would see whether it could be managed for your benefit. Of course, people are not ordinarily allowed on the line, but I know the old stationmaster of a tiny station a few miles out, so I went to ask him if I might go along the line a bit to see what I could find in the botanical way. He was able to get permission, and to-day I have satisfied my curiosity, and have come back to the station (where I am now writing this) with a glorious bunch of flowers.

Before I describe some of my finds, I want to tell you about this piece of line. I well remember when there was no railway here at all, but orchards and fields. When it was built I came to see it in progress. It is an interesting piece of line, because it crosses ground which is hilly, so that in places, to avoid a steep climb for the trains, they have cut through the hill, the banks on either side being thirty to forty feet high. Then it comes out and crosses a valley, but instead of cutting down as low as the bottom of the valley, they have made a bank across with some of the material taken out of the cutting. This answered two purposes—it saved work in digging lower, and made a use for the material taken out. I have tried in fig. 1 to give you an idea of the work by a rough diagram.

Now in this district we have a wonderful thickness of pure chalk, with only a thin layer of ordinary soil upon it. Thus, when this piece of line was first made, the embankments and the causeway across the valley were pure, glaring white. This looked terribly bare and unpromising at first, but you know Mother Nature soon covers up places like that with vegetation of some kind, and before many years had passed it was densely covered with all kinds of plants.

One of the very first to appear in the new home was the Common Red Valerian—I am sure you know the plant, but fig. 2 will refresh your memory. Now, it is a curious fact that this plant may be an almost rare one until the chalk is opened up, as for a railway, but as soon as this happens it immediately arrives. No one seems to know how or whence it comes. It quickly covers the chalk, and in spring and early summer you may see miles



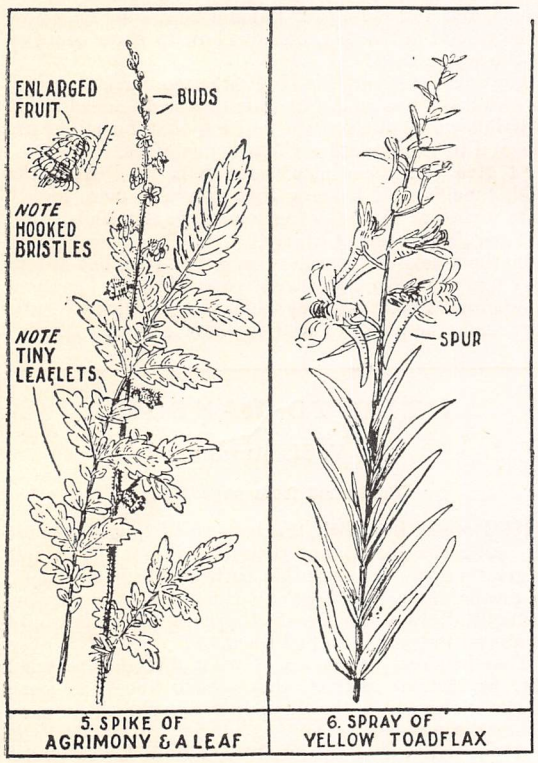
4 SPRAY OF SALAD BURNET

of chalk banks covered from top to bottom with masses of this crimson-red flower. Some say the seeds are in the pure chalk, and when it is opened they germinate. But the chalk is a deposit of the sea of thousands of years ago, and I hardly think seeds would persist all

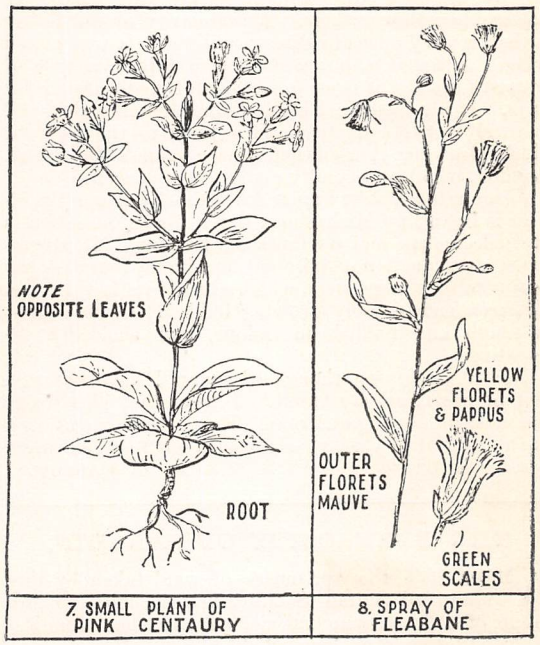
that time. But the fact remains, and certain it is that Red Valerian is very keen to grow on chalk.

Wherever you find chalk, you may be sure that thousands of years ago that part of the earth was *under water*. As proof of this, fossil fish and sponges are easily found in freshly opened chalk. Fig. 2 shows you a common fossil I found in this very cutting when this railway was being made. It is a sea-urchin, a very common form of fossil. I give you two views of it, so that you will easily recognise if you look for it in any chalk you meet—or you may even find them on heaps of flints one sometimes sees by the roadside, for flints, you know, come out of chalk. The sea-urchin is something like a limpet in shape, and has five double grooves meeting at the point and in the middle of its flat bottom. Look out for one—they are curious because they are so *very* old.

But let me return to my voyage of discovery. When I arrived here (on a very hot day in August) I left my bicycle and walked down the line on the top of the bank across the valley. Here I found many interesting plants, but most such as one finds in the hedges, for you see the seeds have arrived there by the



help of the wind or birds. I found Salad Burnet, a very graceful plant. Fig. 4 shows you a spray. Its flowers are carried in mop-like heads, green, generally tinged with red. The top flowers of each head have pistils only, which are like tiny little red sweep's brushes. The lower flowers have stamens with yellow anthers, which hang out on very slender threads. This arrangement makes fairly sure of the pollen from the stamens going to flowers with pistils which do not



belong to its own head of flowers, for you see the pistils are *above*. Note the very pretty stipule which clasps the stem where the leaves join. Also note the graceful leaves composed of thirteen much-cut leaflets. These leaves smell and taste like cucumbers. This plant's Latin names, *Poterium Sanguisorba*, give a glimpse of its early uses. *Poterium* means a 'drinking-cup,' and old writers tell us the leaves were put in wine-cups. *Sanguisorba* means 'blood-stanching'; it seems that at one time these plants were used in some way to stop the bleeding of wounds.

Everywhere I found large plants of Colt's Foot—a plant which always crops up whenever it gets half a chance. You must know its rosettes of large spreading leaves with rough points. Its flowers do not appear until its leaves have long been dead. You will find an article all about it in one of the current issues of *Chatterbox Newsbox*, so I will not tell you more here.

Lovely patches of Marjoram I found, and pretty plants of Agrimony (fig. 5). This is a quaint plant. I give a sketch of it; note its extra sets of leaflets and its stipules. Its flowers, you know, are bright buttercup yellow. The calyx is covered with little hooks, and when ripe they get carried away on animals' fur and on 'humans'' clothes.

Toadflax (fig. 6) too I found. Have you ever noticed what a beautiful little flower it is, with its long yellow spurs and bright orange lip? Of course, it is a wild snapdragon.

I came back to the station, and then went up the other way into the deep cutting. Of course, Valerian was there. But I at once found a very favourite

flower, and one I have not met about here before—Pink Centaury. It is one of the daintiest little plants I know. I show you a whole plant (fig. 7). Its leaves are of pale yellow green, and they occur in opposite pairs, and its flowers are like wax—a dainty pale pink with very noticeable yellow anthers. A peculiarity of the flower is that it only opens in direct sunlight. It was closed when I gathered it, but when I placed it in a vase of water in the sun it came out beautifully, and lasted for days. It is a medicinal herb of considerable value, and one well worth collecting and sending to the National Herb Growing Association, Queen Anne's Chambers, London, who are generally ready to purchase it.

Just one more plant I must describe—Fleabane (fig. 8). This is like a tiny Michaelmas Daisy, for its outer florets are pale mauve and its inner ones yellow. It always looks as though not quite out, but its feathery pappus begins to form very early, which gives it its Latin name, *Eriyeron acris*—'early growing old.' The whole plant is tough and reddish in colour, and decidedly interesting.

Now I must stop, though of course I have not told you of nearly all my 'finds.' I have just picked out the most interesting and rare. Those I have mentioned are all partial to chalky soil, so look out for them when you see chalk. E. M. Barlow.

THE GENEROSITY OF SALADIN.

AMONGST the 'prisoners of war' taken by that renowned Sultan, Saladin, was the brave knight, Hugo of Tabarie, who had yielded only when from loss of blood he could no longer hold his sword.

Saladin was well pleased to have secured such a prisoner, whose rank in his own country was that of a prince.

'Not easily shall you get out of my clutches,' he told Sir Hugo. 'You must either pay a ransom of one hundred thousand golden bezants or lose your head.'

'Then I must die,' calmly replied Hugo, 'for were I to sell the whole of my possessions I could not pay half of the sum that you demand.'

Saladin admired the courage of his captive. 'I would not that so excellent a knight should perish for lack of money,' he said. 'I will give you a chance of life. Go back to your comrades and ask them to help you. Surely they would do much for such a good warrior! But you must give me your promise to return on a certain fixed day.'

Hugo thanked Saladin and readily gave the required promise. As soon as he had sufficiently recovered from his wounds he went away.

Up and down Palestine he wandered, asking the Christians in that country to lend him the gold for his ransom. But he found it impossible to collect so much as the half of that immense sum before the day fixed for his return. So, with a heavy heart and sad, tender thoughts of his wife and children beyond the sea, whom he should never see again, he went back to the Sultan with the news of his failure.

'Alas!' exclaimed Saladin, 'I have vowed that you shall die unless the ransom is paid in full. Yet it grieves me much to slay one who would rather die than break his word. Many a man in your place would have made his escape.'

'Stronger than bolts and bars and heavy chains of iron is the plighted word of a knight,' said Sir Hugo proudly. 'To those who have been admitted into our order, their honour is dearer than life.'

Then the Sultan, much interested, took the prisoner aside and questioned him about the sacred order of knighthood. And as he listened to Sir Hugo's description of it he felt more and more averse to ordering the execution of this noble man. Yet he considered that he, too, was bound to keep his word. What was to be done?

When Hugo had finished speaking Saladin sat for a time in serious thought. Then he led the knight into the crowded hall.

'See,' said the Sultan, 'a gallant foeman, who must die if none will pay his ransom of a hundred thousand golden bezants. Who amongst you is willing to purchase his life?'

This appeal met with an immediate and most generous response. Pressing eagerly forward, the Saracen chiefs poured forth their gold, and in a very few minutes the hundred thousand golden bezants lay before Saladin.

'You are free,' he said to Sir Hugo, 'and this gold, offered to me for your ransom, I now bestow upon you. Accept the gift, noble stranger. Return with it to your people, and tell them that Saladin knows not only how to be valiant in the fray, but also how to show courtesy to the vanquished.'

For some moments Sir Hugo was too much overcome to speak. When he *did* find his tongue, he added to his heartfelt words of thanks a petition that he might use the gold to ransom other Christian captives.

'I give you them also,' said Saladin. 'Keep the gold, though well I know that you will more highly prize my other gift: the freedom of your friends. All of them shall be set at liberty.'

So the Christian prisoners were set free, but before they left the place they were entertained as honoured guests for a few days, after which, loaded with presents, they made their way to the Crusaders' camp. E. D.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 172.)

THE street in which the boys stood seemed almost entirely deserted, but their one desire was to put as great a distance as possible between them and Levi, to escape from the Jews' quarters into the narrow, tortuous alleys of the city itself, where, surely, it would be almost impossible to find them.

They had very little idea of what direction to take, but, by luck or instinct, they struck upon the same streets along which the Jews had brought them more than six weeks before.

About half-a-mile separated them from Levi's house, when an unexpected and insurmountable obstacle brought them up short. Straight across the end of the street along which they were running loomed a massive pair of gates, tightly closed and barred. When they came nearer and showed their desire to pass through, a truculent-looking negro sentry started up from behind a glowing brazier and shouted at them in Arabic to go away, calling them 'dogs of Jews!'

Then Dick realised that this gate was placed there to close the Jewish quarter at night, and to prevent its despised inhabitants from roaming about the city. Plainly, it would be of no use to attempt to pass through until the morning: plainly, too, it would be better to submit and go away quietly than to enter into any sort of discussion with the warder.

After explaining this in a whisper to Sandy, the two boys slipped aside into an archway, where they spent the night, half dozing, half wakeful. After all, the delay, although annoying, was not serious; it was not in the faintest degree likely that Levi's household would discover their escape until about eight o'clock, the hour when their morning meal was usually brought to them, and Abbas presented himself for their Arabic lesson.

The archway made a very hard and uncomfortable sleeping-place. Long before dawn both boys were awake and anxiously watching the sky turn from dark to pale and yet paler blue, and the stars die out one by one as the light strengthened.

At last the yawning sentry rose from beside his little brazier over which he had been crouched asleep, and flung the great gates wide with a resounding clang. He strode away down the street, and the way of escape was clear to Dick and Sandy once more.

In the fresh morning air the boys passed along streets whose inhabitants were just beginning the day's work. In the bazaars merchants were setting out their wares, and presently strings of camels and donkeys, laden with fodder, began to swing along, jostling the foot-passengers to one side.

Dick and Sandy attracted no particular attention. Indeed, by now they were so thoroughly sunburnt and grimy that, in their native dress, they passed very well as Jew boys. Moreover, when any one spoke to them, they were able to answer in very fair Arabic.

Indeed, their only claim to especial notice lay in the fact that they did indeed appear to be Jews, and this fact they were destined to discover in no very pleasant fashion.

'We'd better get out of the town as quickly as we can, Sandy,' Dick suggested. 'Then there won't be much chance of the old beast finding us.'

'Yes, and we shall be able to settle about things better in a clean place away from all this row and dirt,' Sandy answered disgustedly. 'Oh, Dick, do let us get back to the beach; let's have a bath! Wouldn't it be ripping?'

'It *would*,' Dick said, emphatically, and his eyes brightened at the mere suggestion of a swim in clear, bright salt water. They began to walk on more briskly, glancing from right to left for landmarks.

'We're on the way to the gates I do believe,' Sandy said, with satisfaction. 'I remember that place where they're selling turkeys. And then we went along there—through that narrow street where they're making brass things—don't you remember the row? I say, look out where you're going. . . .'

A hulking negro lad had deliberately jostled Sandy into a pool of mud, and the boy involuntarily expostulated in his own tongue. Of course, the negro did not understand a word, but he did understand Sandy's raised hand and angry look. He picked up a handful of mud and flung it at the English boy, and it was all that Dick could do to persuade his brother to come on quietly, without retaliating.

As it was, quite enough mischief had been done. The negro called to some of his companions, and a little knot of boys of various races began to follow Dick and Sandy, jeering and shouting vile words at the supposed 'dogs of Jews.'

'Don't take any notice, Sandy,' Dick implored. 'They won't follow us far—I don't suppose for a moment that they'll come outside the gates.'

With the hope of speedy escape before them, the two boys plodded on bravely, looking neither to right nor left. They were close to the gates now; they could see the groups of sentries, sitting and standing in the archway, and the broad and sandy track beyond which led away, as they knew, towards the beach where they had been cast up.

But now, again, their luck seemed altogether to fail them. As they neared the gates, the crowd of Moorish and negro boys closed round them, barring the way. The sentries, too, came forward with threatening actions, speaking in rapid Arabic.

Bit by bit Dick and Sandy realised that, because they seemed to be Jews, they were not to be allowed to leave the city, at least without a permit. Evidently there was some rule of this kind in the Moorish towns, although, of course, the boys had been absolutely ignorant of anything of the sort.

They were given no time to consider the best course to pursue. Jesting and laughing, howling and shrieking, came their tormentors, closing in upon them. Soon they went beyond words, and began to fling stones and handfuls of mud, whilst the sentries urged them on with applause and laughter.

Dick's face was very white now, under its grime and tan. He pulled Sandy close to his side, glaring defiantly at the circle of cruel, mocking faces. 'Stand back to back with me, old man,' he said, 'and don't be frightened—at least, don't show it. They're only cowardly brutes!'

But Dick did not reckon on the power of numbers; their foes were many against few, and, therefore, courageous. Gradually they edged closer, and at last one of them, leaping suddenly forward, struck Sandy a violent blow on the shoulder.

At that the elder boy's self-control and patience gave way completely. Clenching his fists, he sprang forward and knocked down the hulking Moorish lad who had attacked his brother. Sandy followed his example, and the two boys set about them valiantly in good Eng ish fashion. Their assailants were taken aback for a moment, but soon recovered themselves, and came on all the more fiercely.

For all their pluck, the boys could not hope to hold out for long against so many. Already, Sandy's blows were growing weaker, and Dick flung himself between the younger boy and the Moorish lad who was persistently attacking him. Dick's fists were bruised and bleeding; he was panting with his fierce exertions after their long and weakening imprisonment. It is impossible to say what might not have happened had they been overpowered.

But suddenly an extraordinary and unexpected thing happened. From somewhere beyond the hostile circle which surrounded the two boys, ringing clear over the tumult, came the sound of an unmistakably English voice.

'Hold on, boys—I'll help you! I'm coming!'

(*Continued on page* 191.)

"He sprang forward and knocked down the hulking Moorish lad."

"Men with axes and iron-pointed cant-poles were running towards him."

IN THE DARK.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Concluded from page* 163.)

THE firing stopped, and Tom saw blurred objects on the snow; two or three, he thought, because he could not count. One crawled a few yards and then fell down. Tom had a feeling of horror, but he was not, so to speak, afraid. The wolves had vanished; they did not devour their fallen companions, as he had heard they did. Steve, however, was cramming cartridges into the magazine, as if he expected them to come back.

'Watch out!' he said as he finished. 'We'll square the deal up now!'

Tom had a vague notion that the man was thinking of his partner whom the wolves had killed, but this did not matter. The brutes were returning, and he could never quite remember all that happened afterwards. Steadying the barrel on the log, he fired as fast as he could load. He could not tell how Steve was shooting; he saw nothing but the lean, grey animals on which he tried to fix the sights. He might have crouched behind the log for half a minute or half an hour, for all he knew, when he heard shouts and a crash of brittle undergrowth. Then Steve sprang over the log, and ran across the snow, stopping once or twice to throw his rifle to his shoulder. The wolves had gone, and men with axes and iron-pointed cant-poles were running towards him.

When Steve came back to meet them, Tom saw he had been mistaken. All the wolves had not gone, and the men were looking at those that remained.

'Three,' said one. 'Pretty good shooting in the dark!'

'I wanted the lot,' Steve replied. 'There's one or two more that won't run very long.'

The men looked at him curiously, and another said: 'Well, the hides are worth something, and you'll get the bounty.'

Steve laughed, a harsh laugh. 'The dollars don't count! I was thinking of another night. But how d'you get here so quick?'

'We had to go back a piece from the lake for logs that would make good stringers. As the boss thought a thaw was coming, we reckoned we'd haul them down to the water while the snow was good, and kept on after dark. Heard the shooting, and allowed we'd better come along. But say, d'you think the wolves were getting after you?'

'They took the deer—sixty yards off,' Steve replied meaningly. 'Then you can see where two are lying. Don't know what they'd have done next if you hadn't come along.'

'But why didn't you throw the meat away when you heard them first?'

'Wouldn't have been much use in that. If they'd wanted me, they'd have got me anyhow. Besides, they've spoiled my sleep nights, and made me think of what I wanted to forget. Then I remembered my partner, and——'

'You could have sent the lad on,' another man remarked.

'I wasn't sure I could hold them long enough to let him make your shack. Besides, he wouldn't go.'

'Then he has some sand. But we'd better get those hides off, and we left our ox team back in the bush.'

An hour later Tom reached the shack, and was given supper, which he felt he needed. Afterwards the men sat smoking and arguing whether the wolves had meant to attack him and Steve. Their opinions differed, and Tom did not hear the end of the dispute. He felt dull and sleepy, and had resolved to stop at the camp all night. It was comforting to reflect that, although he had run away from an imaginary danger in the dark, when the real pinch came he had stood his ground. For all that, he did not want to bear such a strain again.

SOMETHING LIKE AN APPLE!

A GIANT apple has been exhibited at the Royal Horticultural Society's Hall, Vincent Square, Westminster. It was the result of a curious experiment. A small apple-tree, taken out of the ground and placed in an ordinary flower-pot, had only one apple, but that apple was sixteen inches in circumference and five and a half inches in depth. This giant has been named the 'Wilks.' after the society's secretary, the Rev. W. Wilks.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall.

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 179.)

THE two younger boys walked on. 'You see what he's like,' said Jimmy, who was very white about the nostrils. 'I'm going to stick it out now, though. He didn't do anything when I cheeked him.'

'Do you mean you'll go on fagging for him?'

'Yes. If I don't, and I'm hauled before the Prefect, he'll only say he hasn't bullied me. I shall look like a fool. I've got to tackle him by myself.'

'You're a plucky lad, Henshaw. *I* can see all right what a beast he is, but if you give him what he gives you, as you did just now, I believe you'll get the better of him. I'll tell you what, though. I'm not going to stand that sort of thing from the Conqueror, even if we've got to put up with it from Williams.'

'No more am I,' said Jimmy, quietly.

'What are you going to do?'

'I'm going to ask Buttons to teach me to box.'

Buttons was the Sergeant-Instructor in the Gym. The Gym, for some reason, was not very popular with the Whyborough boys. They all had to attend it for an hour a week, but hardly any of them took advantage of it at other times, as they were permitted to do. Jimmy had been there once or twice in the afternoon when the rest were playing football, and had made friends with Buttons, who was only too glad to find somebody, even a new boy, to talk to during the time he had to be on duty. He had told Jimmy tales of his soldiering experiences. He had been through the South African War, in which Jimmy's father had been killed, and the second time they talked together Buttons said that he had been reading some old papers he had kept, and had found out that Jimmy's father had earned the D.S.O., which Jimmy hadn't told him, and remembered hearing of the fine things he had done before he had been killed. So they had made friends. 'I'm sure he'll teach me to box if I ask him,' said Jimmy. 'Then I'll tackle the Conqueror. I'll tackle Williams, too, if he goes on as he's doing now. I won't stand it.'

CHAPTER VI.

Mr. A. J. Spedding was a fair scholar as well as a great cricketer, and he was very thorough in everything he undertook. He had made Jimmy work hard, and during the term he had had to stay away from Whyborough he had coached him diligently in the special books that the Lower Fourth were taking, so that he should not lose his place when he went to school. As Jimmy had had his special attention, instead of being one of a large class of boys, he had gained rather than lost in school work by his enforced absence, and when he got to Whyborough he found that it was quite within his power to struggle for a place at the top of the Form, although his place would have been near the bottom amongst the new boys, and was actually at the bottom, as he was now newer than any of them. The three or four boys immediately above him had been moved up from the Third.

The Form Master was Mr. Jenkins. He was a short, stout, middle-aged man, a martyr to gout, and with a temper, in consequence, that made him considerably dreaded by the boys of his Form. He was a very strict disciplinarian, and there was never a whisper of disturbance in his room during school hours. On the first morning of school after chapel, Mr. Jenkins came stumping solidly into the room and up to the dais on which his desk was, from which he proceeded to make a short speech, in sharp, snappy sentences.

'We did some work last term,' he said. 'We are going to do a good deal more this term. Or there'll be punishments. Nobody in this Form stays away from chapel without a punishment. The punishment will be two hundred lines of Homer written in a double-lined exercise-book, *with accents*.'

This was terrific. The term before, it had been only a hundred lines, which had been earned three times. In other Forms, where an excuse for lateness was sometimes accepted, boys cut chapel on the chance of receiving a light imposition, or none. During Jimmy's first term nobody cut chapel in Mr. Jenkins's Form, which goes to show that the threat of severe punishment is sometimes a preventive of crime.

Mr. Jenkins snapped out a few more orders and warnings, and the work of the morning began. In most Forms there would have been a good deal of slackness, partly as the result of both boys and master not being quite ready for full harness after the holidays. In the Lower Fourth harness had to be got into from the first minute, and whatever slackness there was did not show itself in Mr. Jenkins. Several boys had earned impositions before first school, of two hours, was over, and some more when the close of second school brought freedom until five o'clock.

Jimmy rather enjoyed it. He had this advantage over boys who had been to school before, that he had been used to giving his whole attention to work during the hours of work, and the fact that, in Mr. Jenkins's Form, the usual surreptitious conversations and wandering of attention were mostly absent, for fear of the wrath that they would bring, suited him very well. He ended up the morning fifth from the top of the form, instead of at the bottom. The boys above him were the brilliant and diligent ones, to whom work was a delight. He would have a hard tussle to get above any of them, but thought he might get up still further by the end of the term.

Somewhat to his surprise, Mr. Jenkins, who had taken no notice of him during school-time, except as a unit in the class of thirty boys, called him to him when morning school was over. 'You've worked very well,' he said, in his stiff, rather uncomfortable manner.

'Thank you, sir,' said Jimmy, and waited for more to come.

But no more did come. Mr. Jenkins gathered up his papers and put on his cap, and Jimmy understood that he was expected to leave him. He told Pilling, with whom he walked back to Stanhope's, of the praise that had been bestowed on him.

'That's the first time I've ever known old Tums say he was pleased with anybody,' said Pilling. 'I say, Henshaw, you're not going to turn into a sap, are you?'

Pilling was not exactly a 'sap' himself. He was clever enough, but lacked concentration. He was one of the boys who had received lines that morning.

'What's a sap?' asked Jimmy, who had not learnt all the Whyborough expressions yet.

'Oh, a fellow who saps,' said Pilling. 'If old Tums has marked you down as one of his specials, you'll be lost to us, dear child. I shouldn't do too much for him, if I were you, or he'll work you to a shadow.'

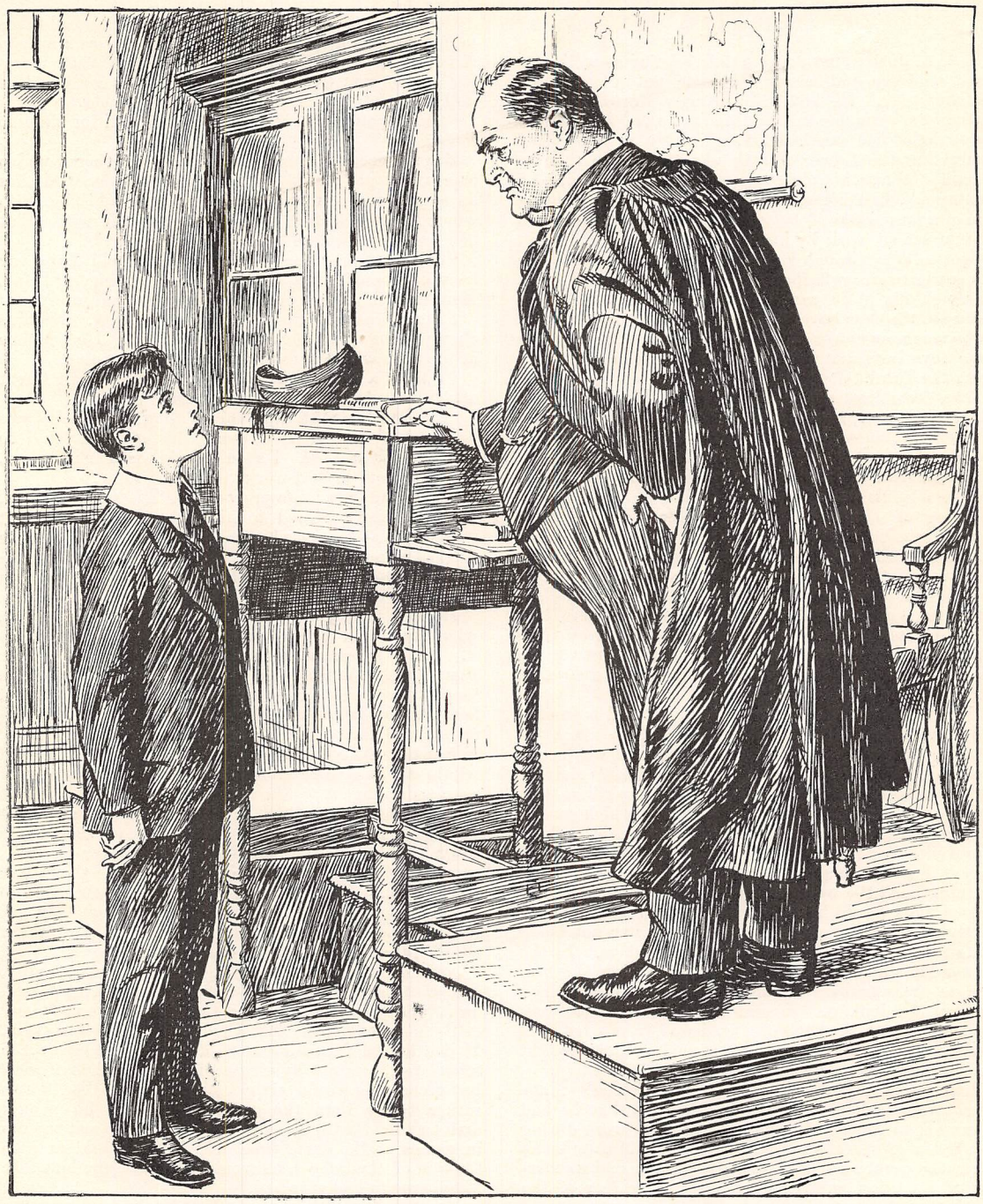
Jimmy was not quite prepared for this point of view. It had never occurred to him—strange as perhaps it may appear—to regard school work as a thing to be shirked as much as possible. He did not commit himself to Pilling, but observed the habits of the boys in his Form rather carefully during the next few days.

He saw that there were a few, already mentioned, who liked work for its own sake and were very good at it. As it happened, none of these boys in the Lower Fourth were much good at games. They were the 'saps' pure and simple, who would go up the school fast, earning prizes on the way, and get their scholarships for Oxford or Cambridge at the end of their time. When they should arrive at the Sixth Form the school would be at a particularly high point in the way of scholarship, but it would not perhaps be at its highest with regard to discipline. For saps don't make the best Prefects. Jimmy observed that those of the Lower Fourth exercised no particular influence over the rest, some of whom were even inclined to pester them over their work. They had not yet earned their right to work undisturbed, as they would do when they got rather higher up in the school. Jimmy did not think that he wanted to be a sap pure and simple.

Next to these were a few boys who worked steadily, and were already showing themselves good at games. In Lower Fourth, it happened that there were not many of these at this time. But Henderson was one of them. If one looked forward one might see him going up the school fast, too, not by virtue of any special brilliance, but because he would always stick to it and had brains rather better than the ordinary. When he should arrive at the Sixth, he would probably arrive at the top in games at the same time, and if he should ever be Captain of the School, he would be one of the best that Whyborough had ever had.

Another class of boy whom Jimmy observed was the one that consisted of those, rather older and bigger than the rest, who were specially good at games but not much good at work. Some of them worked fairly well, but were slow at it; others did as little as they possibly could.

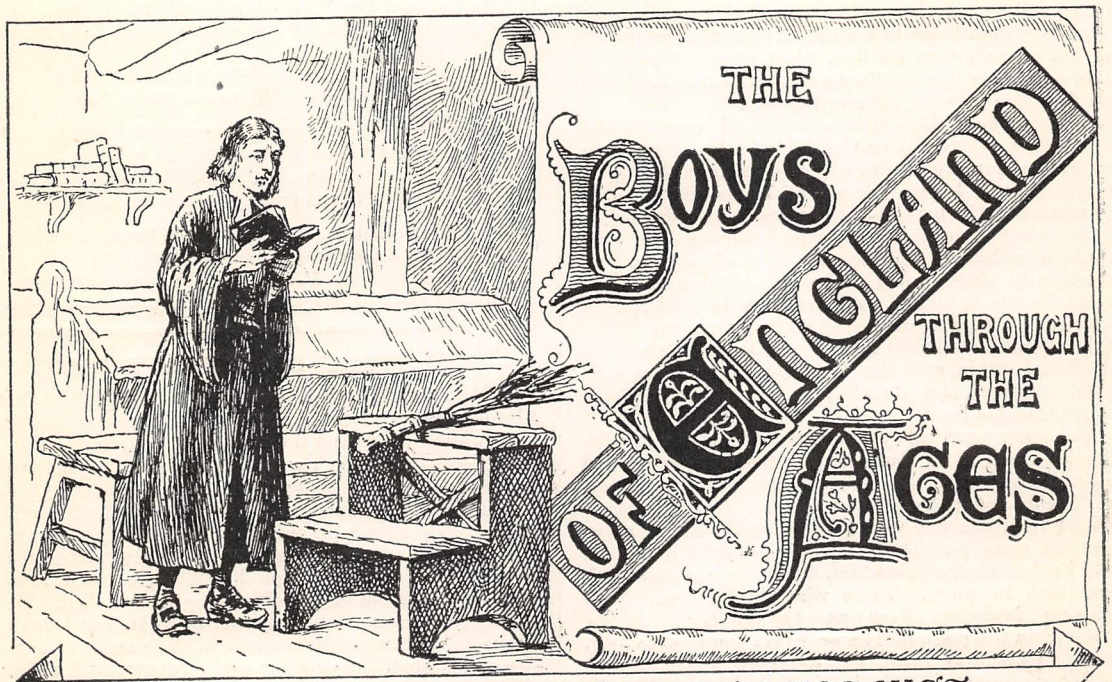
The main body of the Form was composed of ordinary



"'You've worked very well,' he said, in his stiff, rather uncomfortable manner.'"

boys, from those who were fairly good both at work and games to those who were not much use at either. These merged into the unashamed slackers, to whom the Lower Fourth was a period of purgatory, for they escaped none of the consequences of their slacking, and Mr. Jenkins was down on them more than any other master in the school.

Jimmy came to the conclusion that he wanted to be good at work and games too, and informed Pilling of his decision. (*Continued on page* 198.)



IV. SCHOOL-BOYS OF THE RENAISSANCE.

WHEN the Wars of the Roses came to an end, and the people of England settled down to enjoy times of peace, they welcomed the new thirst for knowledge which was then spreading over Europe, and scholarship became the ideal of the time. So keen, in fact, was this search after learning that one man, while living a life of poverty, declared that if he got some money he would first buy Greek books, and what was left should go for food and clothes.

But, in spite of this enthusiasm, boys did not even then go willingly to school. Perhaps one of the chief reasons for this was the great frequency of flogging, which was done more for its general effect than to punish any particular fault. One schoolmaster made a rule that whenever the boys sat down to dinner five or six of them should be called from the table and severely flogged before the meal was finished. And a man who afterwards became famous in the days of Queen Elizabeth, when describing his boyhood, said that he went first to St. Paul's, and later was moved to Eton, and on his first day at Eton, before he entered the schoolroom, he was seized and given fifteen strokes with the birch.

St. Paul's School, which was founded by John Colet, one of the greatest scholars of the Renaissance, in 1512, consisted of four rooms. One of these was used as a chapel and one for teaching the principles of religion. Of the other two, one was for the upper forms, under the Head Master, and the other for the lower forms, under the second master, or usher. These two masters and the chaplain did all the teaching between them, although there were one hundred and fifty-three boys in the school, divided into eight classes. All the boys in the top class were monitors, and each class had a 'captain,' or top boy, who sat at a separate desk, just in front of the forms of the rest of the class.

St. Paul's was a day school, and at seven o'clock in the morning a bell was rung, and all the boys gathered in front of a picture of the child Jesus on the wall over the Head Master's chair, and sang a hymn. These boys wore long, broad-sleeved gowns, girded at the waist with a strap, from which hung a small horn, holding ink and a quill pen. Their hair was long, and was allowed to fall straight over their ears. Besides ink and pen, each boy carried his own candle for use in the evening in winter, and was expected to subscribe towards the cost of a fire. Apart from that, the school was entirely free, except for a sort of entrance fee of fourpence, which went to one poorer boy, who earned that money by sweeping out the schoolroom every Sunday.

When the morning prayers were finished the boys sat on benches raised in three tiers on either side of the

class-room, and, taking out ink-horn and pen, worked at Latin and Greek till eleven o'clock. They then, at the tolling of the bell, again had prayers, and afterwards went home to dinner. At one they returned, and worked as before till five, when, after a third visit to the chapel for prayers, they went out to trundle hoops, spin tops, and play leap-frog or football.

In those days boys left school and went to the Universities at Oxford or Cambridge when they were thirteen or fourteen years old; but that, although it implies a good knowledge of Latin and Greek, does not mean that the boys of the day were so exceptionally clever or hard-working, because no other subjects were taught at school, except the principles of religion and occasionally singing and recitation. Before entering St. Paul's the boys had to know how to read and to write and to be able to repeat their Catechism. Then in the school they learnt to read and to translate both Greek and Latin, and also to write original verses in those languages, and to make speeches in them without reference to the book.

Once every year the boys of several of the larger London schools—those of St. Paul's among the rest—assembled in the churchyard of St. Bartholomew the Great, near Smithfield, and there, 'upon a bank boarded about under a tree,' one boy would get up and start an argument on some grammatical point, in Latin or Greek, until his knowledge failed him, and some one who knew more took his place. Those who did best were then given gold bows and silver arrows as prizes.

When, in the reign of Henry VIII., the priory of St. Bartholomew was dissolved, the competition lapsed, until it was started again in the cloisters of Christ's Hospital, an older school than St. Paul's, but not so big. A few years later the custom was abolished altogether as a recognised festival; but the rivalry between the various schools still existed, and when the boys of St. Paul's met those of another grammar school, St. Anthony's, where both Sir Thomas More and John Whitgift were educated, challenges of all sorts were issued. In pictures Saint Anthony was always shown followed by a pig, and so the boys of St. Paul's would cry 'Ho, Anthony Pigs!' and the boys of St. Anthony's would answer with cries of 'Paul's Pigeons,' because of the birds which flew round St. Paul's Cathedral.

Then one boy would challenge another to argument, and, as there were no longer any settled rules for a competition, in a short while argument with words gave place to the more forcible argument of fists and blows from satchels full of books, till every one joined in a general scrimmage.

There were no holidays for schoolboys at that time, except the single days of festivals; but the practice of leaving school at five left a fair time each day for sports. A schoolmaster of those days, Roger Ascham, who wrote a book in which he complained of the general fondness of schoolmasters for the birch and the rod, gave a list of the games and sports in which boys took most delight. He mentions riding, running, shooting 'fair in bow and surely in gun,' vaulting, jumping, wrestling, and swimming, hunting, dancing, singing, and playing on musical instruments, and playing at tennis. And all of these, says this schoolmaster, 'be not only comely and decent, but also very necessary, for a courtly gentleman to use.'

G. Belton Cobb.

ONE NIGHT IN SPRING.

DID you hear the fairies singing all last night,
As they danced on grass dew-jewelled, by moonlight?
Stars in myriads smi'ed on them while they sang,
And the blue-bell chimes soft music sweetly rang.

'Twas the fairies' feast, to welcome in the Spring,
When they vied with one another gifts to bring:
Warm sun kisses, to unfold the shyest flower,
Wind caresses, soft and cooling, every hour.

Pale gold moonbeams, shades of night to chase away,
Misty dews, all pearly white at dawn of day;
Then the fairies hush'd their laughter, and were gone
Ere the gleaming East proclaimed the new-born morn.

THE STORY OF A BRAVE MAN.

JAMES MAXWELL was pilot of the *Clydesdale*, a steamship which, in the year 1827, went to and fro between the Clyde and the west coast of Ireland.

One evening, when the *Clydesdale*, carrying between seventy and eighty passengers, had quitted the Clyde and was crossing the Channel, Maxwell noticed a smell of fire. He at once began to look about for the cause. The master and one of the passengers also noticed the smell. The passenger could not have been much alarmed, for about eleven o'clock he went to bed. But the master was not satisfied, and, while Maxwell was at the helm, went on with the search. The smell of burning timber became stronger and stronger, and at last the master cried out to Maxwell that flames had burst out on the paddle-box.

'Shall I put about?' calmly inquired the pilot.

'No, go on!' said the captain.

Maxwell, praying for strength to do his duty, obeyed. But it soon became evident that such a course would mean certain death for all on board. Maxwell turned the boat round. With his eyes fixed upon that point of the coast for which he was steering, he set himself sternly to his terribly difficult task. In vain the crew tried to subdue the flames, which rose higher and higher. Happily, the ship was one of the swiftest which at that time had ever been built, and she now raced through the water at the top of her speed. The passengers had taken refuge at the prow, where for the time they were safe. But the rapid motion which prevented the fire from reaching *them*, carried the flames and smoke to that part of the boat where Maxwell stood like a martyr at the stake. Though the master and crew flooded the place with water, the cabin beneath him caught fire, making the spot on which he stood intensely hot. And still Maxwell, like the hero he was, never flinched. When, now and again, the wind blew aside for a moment the curtain of smoke and flame which enveloped him, the passengers, seeing him standing there, so bravely labouring for their deliverance, felt cheered and comforted, and very grateful to him.

Meanwhile, the blazing ship, conspicuous in the darkness of night, had been seen by people on shore. A crowd had gathered on the high ground close to an opening in the rocks about twelve yards wide. By means of waving torches and other signals, these people were trying to direct the crew's attention to the spot.

Maxwell quite understood. In spite of his poor

roasted feet, he succeeded—not a moment too soon—in running the ship into the opening, alongside a ledge of rock. Everybody stepped on shore quite unhurt—everybody except the heroic pilot to whom all owed their lives.

His work was not yet done.

'My trunk!' exclaimed one of the passengers. 'I am ruined without it! Five pounds to any one who will get it for me!'

Maxwell, feeling sorry for the man, seized the trunk by its burning handle and dragged it on shore, at the cost of terrible injury to his fingers. And the man forgot to pay the five pounds!

It was not surprising that Maxwell, strong man though he was, never recovered from the effects of that night's work. His doctor just managed to save his life. His feet and hands, as we have seen, were severely burnt. His hair and cap and overcoat, when touched, crumbled into powder. Yet after some time he was able to resume his occupation as a pilot, though he suffered much pain and inconvenience owing to the weakness of his scorched feet. E. D.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 183.)

CHAPTER X.

DICK glanced round wildly, and saw a tall man elbowing his way through the crowd, with a long staff threateningly upraised. The herd of boys and half-grown youths did not venture to oppose him; many of them slunk away, the others he pushed aside, dealing heavy blows in every direction.

He reached Dick and Sandy, and spoke quickly in a hurried undertone: 'You're English, aren't you?'

'Yes . . .' Dick gasped, breathless still.

'Thought so . . . well, stick close by me, and I'll see you through all right.'

He turned and strode towards the city gates, followed closely by the two boys. After the interchange of a few sentences in Arabic between the newcomer and the guards, they allowed him and his companions to pass. Dick gathered that their new friend gave his word that the boys were not Jews, but he felt too utterly exhausted and dazed to be capable of following perfectly the rapid conversation in the new tongue.

Once outside, the stranger led them for some little distance, skirting the high white walls, until they came to a kind of lean-to tent, partly built of hurdles, partly roofed with canvas. The man pulled aside a rug which covered the doorway, and motioned to them to enter.

Within, the sun shining through the canvas roof filled the place with a yellowish light. There was very little to be seen in the way of furniture except a pile of native mattresses and rugs on the floor to serve as a bed, a cooking brazier, and a couple of fair-sized painted wooden boxes. A coarse rug was spread on the beaten sand underfoot, and a few cooking utensils and some tattered dog's-eared books in a corner completed the inventory.

The man let the curtain fall back over the entrance, and sat down upon one of the boxes, motioning the boys to the bed. The rugs felt very soft and grateful to their tired, aching bodies, and they watched in dreamy, exhausted silence whilst their new friend filled a pipe with curiously-smelling native tobacco, lighted it, and stared at them thoughtfully through the smoke between long puffs. 'Pretty lucky thing for you that I turned up when I did, you know,' he remarked at last. 'Those charming niggers and low-class Moors have a fearful down on Jews.'

'How did you know that we were English?' Dick asked.

'By the way you used your fists, my lad—you'll never find Jew, Moor, or nigger who knows anything of boxing. Anyway, it was certain enough to take the chance of calling out to you.'

'It was most awfully good of you, sir,' said Sandy, gratefully.

'Sir . . .!' the man gave a short, grim laugh. 'It's the first time I've been called that for many a long year. . . . Oh, there was no particular goodness in the matter! I knew quite well they wouldn't do me any harm; I'm one of themselves—in a way.'

'But you're not a Moor, are you?' Dick put the question timidly and not a little doubtfully. In spite of the stranger's easy use of the English language, his appearance, in many ways, was far more that of a native. His skin was very dark in colour, although not more so than that of a deeply sunburnt European; his hair and the drooping moustache which hid his mouth were almost black. But his eyes were grey and very quick and observant.

As for his dress, it was a mixture of native and European. He wore a tattered pair of dark-blue dungaree breeches, secured at the waist by a leather belt, but over this and almost entirely concealing the loose cotton shirt which formed the rest of his under-dress, was a garment which the boys afterwards learnt was called a 'djellabah,' such as is worn by the poorer class of Moors. This was of a brownish-yellow colour, and quite shapeless, with loose short sleeves, and a hood which was drawn up over the head.

The man's legs were bare and brown as those of a Moor, and he wore a pair of heelless yellow slippers.

He answered Dick's question carelessly between puffs of his pipe, although he frowned slightly as he spoke, as though at some disquieting remembrance. 'Oh, yes, I'm English—or was . . . I'm not sure what I should call myself now. I've lived here for some time. It's a free life and suits me better than Europe. Besides, I've particular business in Morocco just now.'

'Do you mind telling us your name?' Dick asked, shyly.

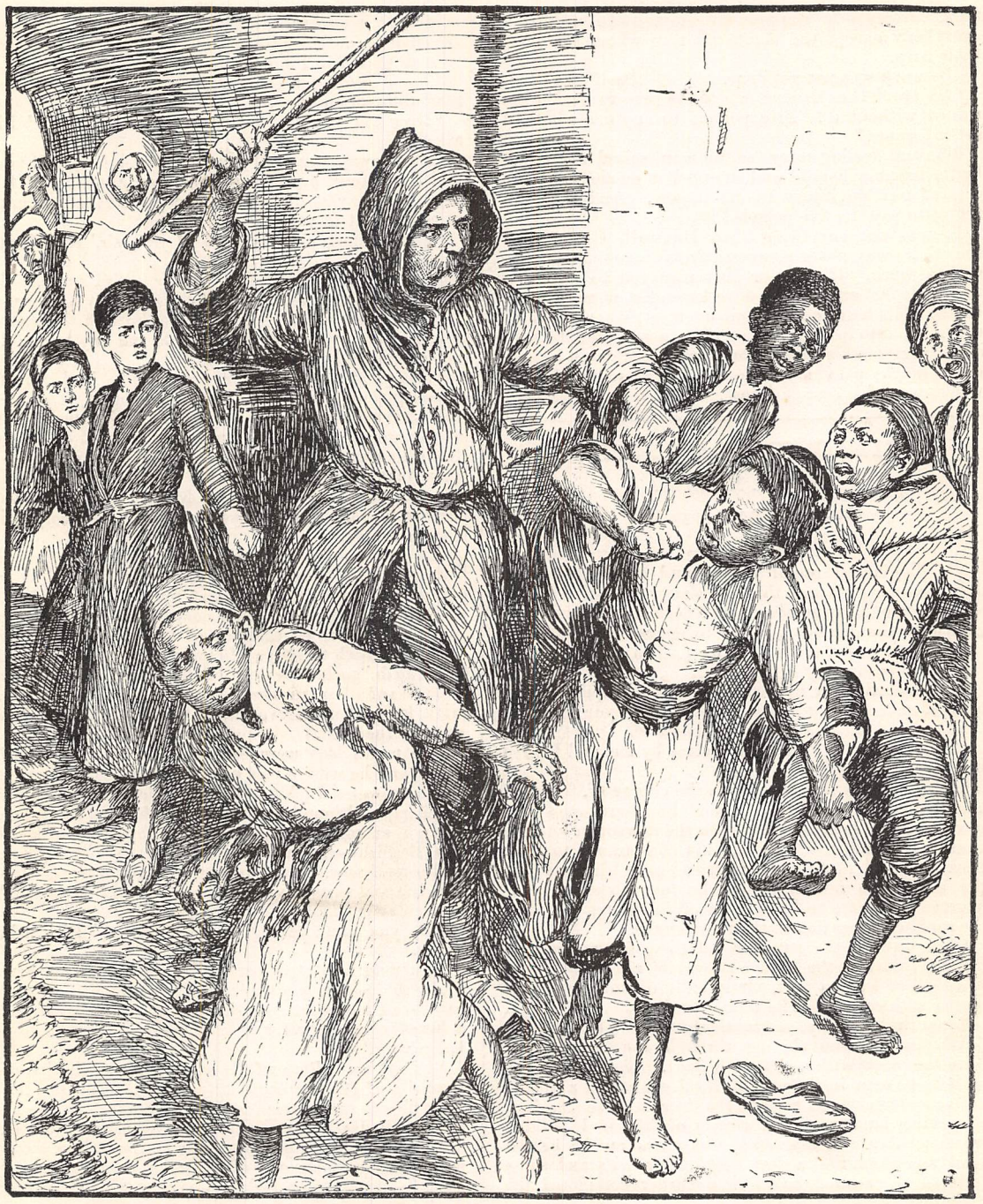
The man hesitated perceptibly before he answered: 'Langridge—that's my name. And now I think you've catechised me about enough, my lad. Suppose we have a bit of your story for a change—and your names, to begin with.'

'Of course. I'm awfully sorry if I was cheeky, or—inquisitive,' Dick apologised, frankly. 'You see, it's so jolly nice to meet some one English again. We're Dick and Sandy Harland—Richard and Alexander, that is.'

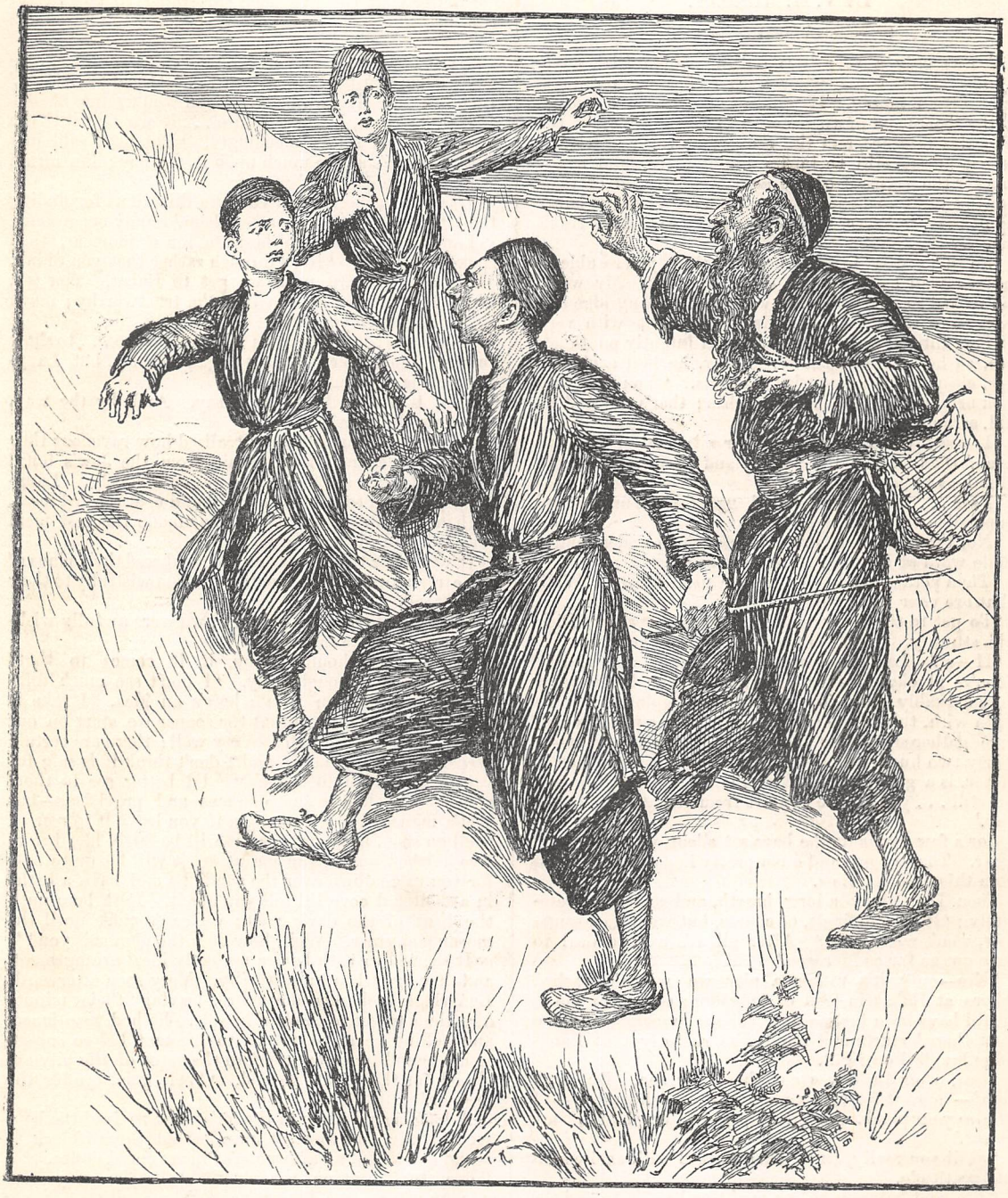
'Well, Richard and Alexander Harland, how did you manage to be in the city of Mogador, disguised as Arab Jews?—that's what I should very much like to know. Up to no good, I'm afraid.'

Langridge spoke with a twinkle of mischief in his eyes, as he glanced from one boy to the other, and Dick launched out into his story.

(*Continued on page* 194.)



"Many of them slunk away, the others he pushed aside."



"Right into the arms of Levi and Abbas."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 191.)

IT was only a very bare outline which Dick gave, helped out occasionally with rather more graphic details from Sandy. He told of their father's capture by the Moors and of their desire to rescue him; of the concealed treasure, and the chance, however uncertain, that it might still be in its hiding-place, and available for the payment of the ransom. He told of their stowing away and the escape of the crew; of the burning of the *Sea Rover*, their casting ashore and imprisonment by the Jews.

'So that's why, in such a short time, you're able to pass so well as natives in dress and talk. My word, you've had some adventures, you two!' Langridge had listened to the whole story in silence, but with very obvious interest, his grey eyes fixed intently on Dick's face, as he smoked steadily. Now, he laid aside the pipe, clasping his knees with his arms. 'You left that book of yours in the Jew's clutches; that's a pity,' he said, seriously.

'I don't think that it will really matter so very much,' Dick answered. 'Sandy and I remember all the directions by heart.'

'I see . . . I suppose the old beggar doesn't understand its possible value, though?'

'No, I'm sure he doesn't. None of them understand a single word of English. I'm positive of that.'

'Then perhaps it doesn't matter particularly. Well, what are your plans now?'

'To get to the pit where the stone is, somehow,' Dick said, sturdily. 'Then to try and find the treasure.'

'H—m.' Langridge rubbed his chin doubtfully.' 'You're plucky lads enough, but do you know what a remarkably big job you're contemplating? To begin with, this is the city of Mogador, as perhaps you have gathered, whilst Rabat—your starting-point—is nearly two hundred miles away. The treasure-place, I gather, is a good deal to this side of Rabat and Sallee, but still . . . you'd have to start from Rabat to find your way.'

For a few moments the boys sat silent, staring at each other. The prospect did seem pretty hopeless, looked at from this point of view.

Then Dick drew a long breath, and answered resolutely: 'It'll be difficult, of course, but we'll do it somehow, won't we, Sandy? After all, it's a good deal to have got as far as Morocco.'

'Yes—only it's rather a pity we weren't washed ashore at Rabat instead of Mogador; seems to me it would have been just as easy for the wrecking to have been there,' murmured Sandy, so ruefully that Langridge laughed outright.

'Yes, your luck was out there, my son. But look here'—he leant forward and spoke very deliberately—'I admire your pluck, and I'll help you to the best of my power.'

'Will you really, sir?' Dick flushed with excitement and gratitude.

'Yes, and between us, we ought to be able to find the place—although, mind you, I don't pretend to have much faith in the treasure. But I know the country well; I expect I can be useful.'

'I should rather think so!' said Dick, warmly, and added shyly, 'I say, sir, we . . . we simply can't thank you.'

'Better wait till I've done something to be grateful for,' Langridge spoke carelessly, bending to pull on his slipper.

'But, of course, you understand . . . I mean . . . we shall make you take a share of . . . of the treasure . . .' Dick stammered awkwardly. 'You won't refuse?'

'Oh, dear, no, I won't refuse . . . if we find it!' the other laughed rather mockingly. 'But as I said just now, don't count too much upon it, my boy; I'm afraid you'll be disappointed.'

'Hadn't we better tell you the directions for finding the pit, as far as we remember them,' Sandy suggested.

Langridge seemed to hesitate for a moment, then spoke decisively. 'No, I'd much rather that you didn't. Wait, at any rate, until we get to Rabat. You see, you can't know for certain that I'm trustworthy; much better keep it to yourself.'

'I say, I wish you'd let us tell you, just to . . . to show that we trust you . . .' Dick began eagerly, but Langridge made a gesture of dissent.

'No, I won't. Wait, as I say. And, by the way, aren't you hungry?'

For the first time the boys realised how ravenous they were. The change to fresh air from the Jew's fœtid house had increased their appetites enormously. Langridge produced some native bread and cold roasted meat, with dried dates and figs, and they made the best meal they had had for many a long day.

It was after this that Sandy remembered their plans of the early morning, and mentioned them wistfully to their new friend.

'We feel so beastly dirty . . . we were awfully wishing to get a bathe in the sea.'

'Well, why shouldn't you, if it comes to that,' Landridge said thoughtfully. 'I don't see much difficulty . . . I tell you what; here's an idea. I take it that you agree with me that the sooner we start on our expedition the better, eh? Very well: there are certain preparations to be made, and I don't think it is safe for you to go back into the city. I'd better see to them alone. We shall want donkeys and provisions—but that's managed easily enough, if you leave it to me. I shall go soon, but I dare say it will be fairly late before I've finished, and in the meantime it will be quite safe for you to go down over the sandhills and have a bathe in a sheltered cove I'll tell you about. Rest here until the heat of the day's past; we can't start until the morning anyway. Well, how does the plan suit you?'

It seemed to both boys a perfectly ideal arrangement, and they agreed enthusiastically. Very soon afterwards Langridge took his departure, leaving them minute directions to get to the bathing-place he had mentioned, and telling them to return to his tent before sunset. 'I am bound to be back before the gates of the city are closed for the night,' he said. 'Well, good-bye for the present.'

A long sound sleep in the quiet tent revived the boys wonderfully, and they set out at about three o'clock to spend as blissful an afternoon as heart could desire. No fierce surf beat on the sheltered beach; only crisp curling waves, just big enough to be exciting. Never had Dick and Sandy enjoyed such a perfect bathe. They swam and dived; finally, they stretched themselves on the hot sand, with their clothes, freshly washed also, spread out to dry in the sun. Both boys felt as though

all their troubles and worries, like the dirt of the Jew's house, had been left behind in the sea.

'How splendid, coming across Langridge!' Dick said fervently. 'I really believe those brutes would have killed us.'

'So do I,' Sandy agreed, and went on excitedly. 'And he's so awfully mysterious and interesting, isn't he—just like a book! I wonder why he lives here, dressed up as a native, and what his important business in Morocco is.'

'Well, perhaps he will tell us some time,' Dick spoke placidly, letting little streams of dry sand run between his bare toes, as he stretched himself, yawning luxuriously. 'O—oh, isn't this sun lovely! . . . anyhow, he's going to help us in *our* important business, and that's all that matters at present.'

'He looks the sort of fellow to have had tremendously exciting adventures,' Sandy said meditatively. 'It must be jolly nice, I think, to go about with bare feet and not bother about anything.'

'I liked the way he wouldn't let us tell him how to find the treasure . . . it was so . . . so straight of him,' Dick said.

'P'r'aps it was only because he doesn't believe there is any,' observed Sandy, shrewdly.

'Anyway, it was straight,' Dick repeated, blinking up at the sky. 'I say, Sandy, I wonder what Father's doing at this minute?'

'I bet he doesn't guess what we're up to,' the younger boy chuckled. 'What *would* he say if he knew!'

But such an effort of imagination was too much for Dick. He sat up, stretched himself, and proceeded to dress. 'You'd better put on your things, too,' he advised. 'The sun's pretty low, and we promised to be back before it set. I'm getting hungry, too.'

Back across the sandhills the boys strolled, disturbing hundreds of little dusty lizards and twittering birds. Before them the dazzling white roofs and minarets of the city rose, looking as lovely and unreal as a picture of fairyland. Along the sandy road caravans were passing and repassing, strings of camels and donkeys, little troops of mounted men or foot-passengers.

Dick and Sandy kept their distance from the beaten track; they were too much afraid of being caught again by their old enemies or others. They walked straight across the dunes, under a sky all gold and rose-colour. Already they could plainly see Langridge's tent, a dingy-coloured blot against the walls which looked as white as wedding-cake.

The boys quickened their pace to a trot over the sandhills. They topped one that was higher than its neighbours and ran laughing down the opposite slope, right into the arms of Levi and Abbas.

(*Continued on page* 203.)

'BRITANNIA'S CHICKENS.'

DURING the war with Germany, some seagulls rendered a great service to a British battleship. The birds, according to their habit, had been following the ship for food. There was a large flock of them. Suddenly they rose from the surface of the water. The watchful sailors understood. The keen eyes of the gulls had detected the periscope of a German submarine. 'Britannia's chickens,' as they are sometimes called, by their warning of ''Ware submarine!' had saved Britannia's ship and Britannia's men.

A NARROW SHAVE.

COLONEL BURNABY was a notable traveller of the nineteenth century. Upon one occasion he reached Oogentch, on the Khivan frontier, with a fourteen days' beard on his face, and he told his Tartar servant to find a native barber for him.

This beard-cutting business seems to have been the most sensational on record.

'On reaching the shop,' says the Colonel, 'we dismounted and sat down in the recess by the barber's side. A crowd of natives gathered about, and soon greatly increased, and was each moment becoming more dense, the whole town having by this time become aware that an Englishman was within the walls and that he was about to be shaved.'

All sorts of people—priests, camel-drivers, merchants—jostled one another, each trying his utmost to obtain a good view of the operation.

Colonel Burnaby felt far from comfortable, with so many eyes staring at him. The thought occurred to him that the barber might consider it a good deed to take his life. Probably the onlookers would have applauded such an act. There was not a friendly face amongst them. No Russian was in the place, and the only authorities were the moullahs, or priests, who were rather more prejudiced against a foreigner than the rest of the population. The Colonel recalled a remark made to him by the district Governor of Kasala: 'If you go to Khiva without an escort, the Khan will very likely have your eyes taken out, or order you into a dungeon.'

But it was too late to profit by the warning. The die was cast: Colonel Burnaby was in the hands of the barber, who now was rubbing a thin strip of steel on a whetstone, the former article being intended to serve as a razor. Evidently a handle was considered a needless luxury.

The street in front of the barber's shop was completely blocked by the crowd. People behind, unable to see the performance to their satisfaction, called out to those in front to sit down and allow them to enjoy the spectacle.

'What will he do next?' asked a man of his neighbour.

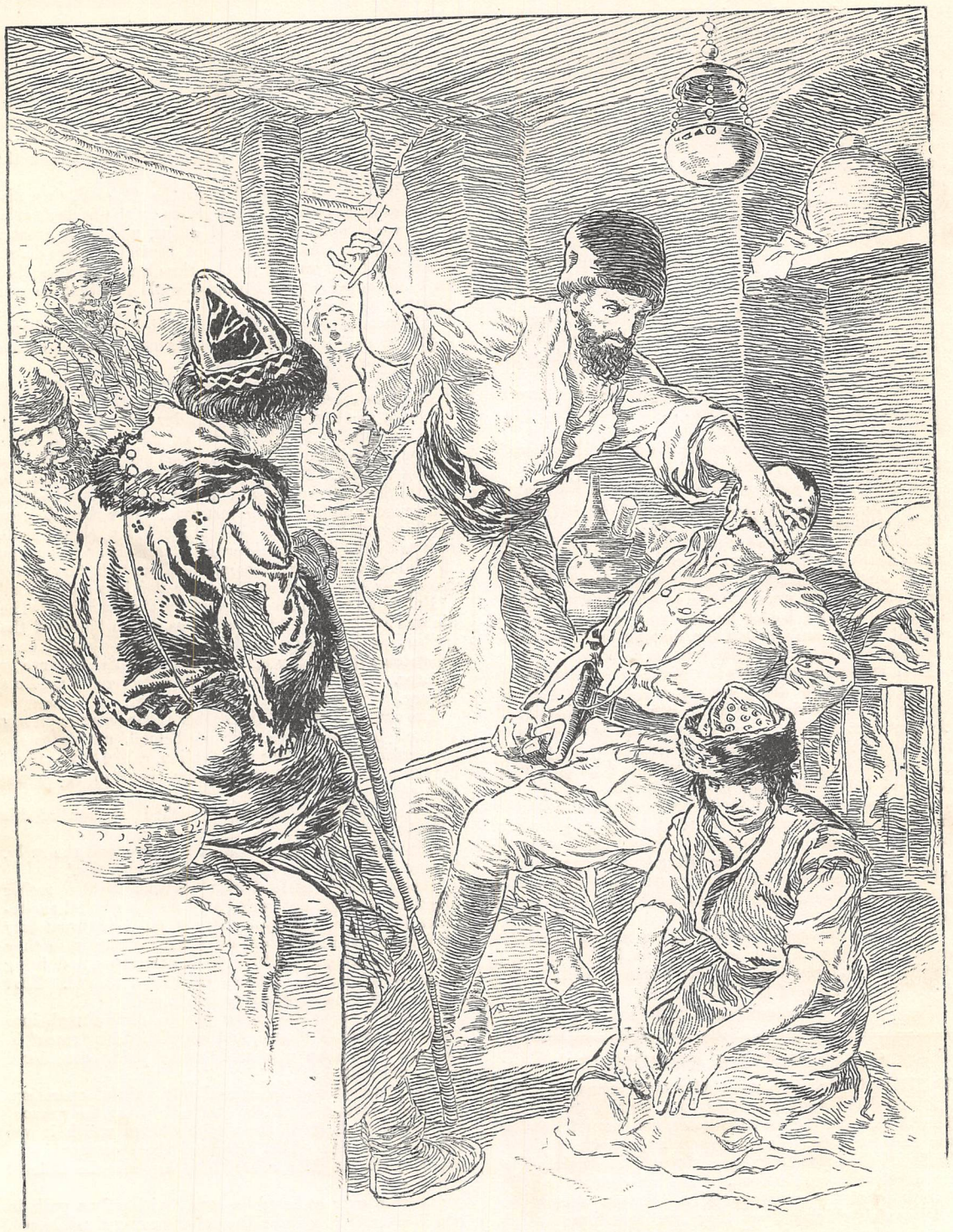
'Have his moustache shaved, perhaps,' was the reply. 'These foreigners have indeed strange customs.'

The Colonel's little Tartar servant became rather alarmed. He had not anticipated such a general excitement as this. 'I hope you will not get your throat cut,' he whispered in his master's ear, 'for in that case they might cut mine, too. May Allah protect us, and bring us out of this scrape! Have your *head* shaved. That would please the people very much.'

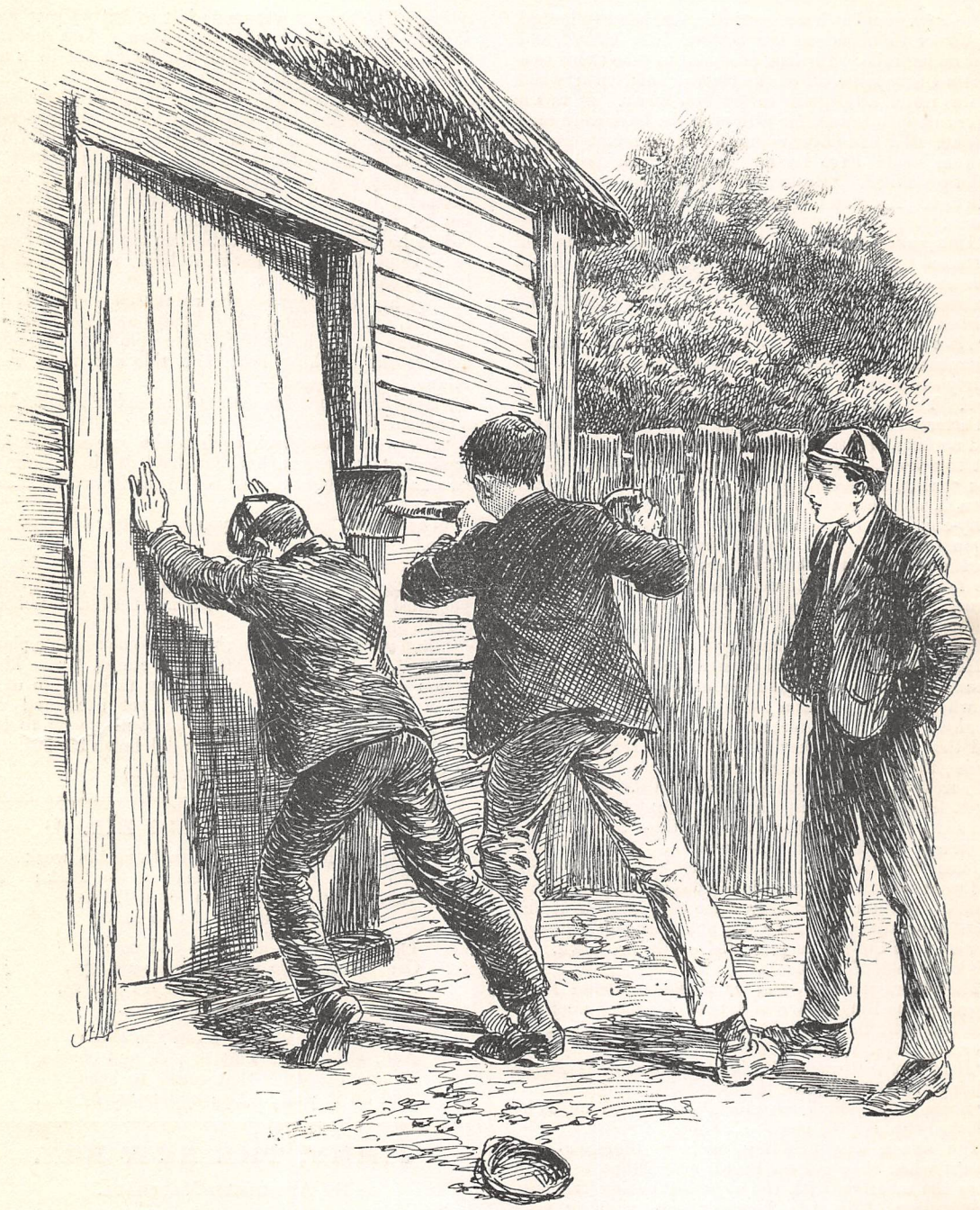
At this moment the barber put his dirty thumb into the Englishman's mouth, and brandished his 'razor' in the air. No soap was used, water being considered quite sufficient.

This shaving was an exceedingly painful operation. At each movement of the barber's wrist the 'razor' tore out those hairs in the victim's beard which it was too blunt to cut. This delighted the spectators, who roared with laughter every time they saw the Colonel wince.

'It was over at last,' he says, 'with only a gash in one cheek, and no greater discomfort or tragedy followed, though the crowd laughed or made impudent remarks, as pleased them best. It was a narrow escape!'



"An exceedingly painful operation."



"Elliott prized the door open with a spade."

HOW 'WYVERN' WON THE CUP.

By Harold Bindloss.

IT was a warm evening, and a light breeze faintly rippled the river-mouth, though the hills in the background had the harsh blue distinctness that threatens an east wind. A row of smacks were moored in the narrow channel, and three boys lay on the shingle opposite a three-quarter-rater racing boat. Her white deck shone in the sunset, and the ebb-tide, which was running fast, rippled against her varnished side.

The boys gazed at her regretfully, for they had helped her owner to blacklead her bottom, trim ballast, and bend racing sails. He had promised to take them to a regatta thirty miles off on the morrow, and then, when all was ready, a telegram called him away. It was a bitter disappointment, for although the boys were used to boats, they had never manned a smart racing craft.

'Tom could have let his business wait for once,' Elliot grumbled. 'Reckoned he'd lose an order if he didn't go. As if an order mattered when he might win a race!'

'He's your cousin, so I'd better not say too much,' Patterson replied. 'Still, he did promise us and should have stuck to it. Anyhow, he might have let us take the boat. Then he could have come on by train if he finished his rotten business in time.'

'He sent you and Watkin to Saltmead once with the centreboard dinghy, and you rather messed the job. Thirty shillings for a new lugsail to replace the one you tore! You may recollect I wasn't there.'

Patterson made the best retort he could, but Watkin said nothing. He seldom did say more than was needful, but somehow his suggestions were carried out. Elliot was daring, Patterson quick, but Watkin, who never hurried, was generally responsible for their exploits.

By-and-by a big smack swung across the tide and began to drift towards the racing boat, and Elliot remarked: 'That's the Saltmead trawler that came in on the flood: must have fouled her anchor when the tide turned. Looks as if she'd drive on top of *Wyvern*.'

Next moment Patterson was on his feet. 'Then we'd better launch the dinghy and try to shove her clear.'

He ran up the beach and crossed the lawn of a house whose owner was away, and the others only caught him up when he stopped at a tool-shed in which *Wyvern's* dinghy was kept. Unfortunately, the door was locked and they had not the key. Elliot prized it open with a spade; they lashed an oar to the dinghy's bow and set off across the lawn, ripping a furrow in the grass.

'A little rolling will put that right,' Patterson remarked. 'Anyhow, there was no time to bring the truck and take her round the drive.'

Then they came to a flower-border he had forgotten, and went straight across, seriously damaging the bedding plants. Watkin looked back when they stopped at the gate for breath. 'Rather a pity about those geraniums; Patterson *is* quick,' he said, and coolly sat down. 'I think I'll take off my boots.'

The others went on, and he presently found them dragging the dinghy across a belt of sticky mud the tide had left, in which Patterson's white shoes sank over their tops.

'Bare feet will wash,' Watkin remarked. 'I rather think you and Elliot will take some dirt on board.'

'Some people think too much,' said Patterson, as he splashed through the mud.

The smack was grinding against *Wyvern's* thin planks when they got on board, and Elliot began to loose the mooring, with the object of letting the boat swing clear. The tide, however, was running very fast, and before he was quite ready the chain slipped off the bitts. When he seized it the jerk brought him to his knees, and the links dragged through his hands. Before he could get a proper hold, he was hanging over the bow, and Patterson, coming to the rescue, seized his legs, instead of the chain. Next moment the end of the latter slipped from Elliot's grasp and fell with a splash. The buoy it was made fast to drifted past, and *Wyvern* swung away with the stream. The sculling oar was below deck and could not be got out in time, and a row of smacks lay close astern.

Patterson hoisted the jib, so they could sail her clear, and glanced round for Watkin, who had disappeared. They called him, and a muffled voice answered from below, 'I'm looking for the anchor. It might be useful.'

Unfortunately, the anchor was unstocked, and when it was put together the forelock pin was bent and would not fit. Watkin did his best, but some time had passed before he came up and shackled on the chain. 'Some folks think too little,' he breathlessly remarked as he looked about.

They had drifted past the point that sheltered the channel, and the smacks and houses up river looked a long way off. The sandy water splashed languidly against the lurching boat, and tide and wind were taking her out to sea.

'Help us to hoist the mainsail instead of gasping like a codfish,' Elliot said.

'She won't beat back against the stream,' Watkin replied. 'You can anchor, but she'll dry in an hour or two, and might get smashed before she floated if the sea got up on the flood.'

'Then,' said Patterson, 'you had better tell us what to do.'

'My opinion is that you have done enough! Wasn't there a door smashed, geraniums wrecked, and a lawn ploughed up? Then I seem to remember that somebody let the mooring go.'

'Stop rotting and try to think of some sensible plan.'

'Well,' said Watkin, 'the rule states, "One kind action every day," and it's better to make a job of it when you begin. Now we can't get back, and we can't stop here; so we might as well go on to the regatta. Then if Elliot's cousin did finish his business in time——'

(*Continued on page* 202.)

THE CHILDREN'S BIT.

WHEN Father's had to leave his work
To fight the German or the Turk;
When Mother toils from morn till eve
Because the maid has had to leave,

Then let us see our girls and boys
Can throw aside their games and toys,
And show they're willing, aye! and fit,
And glad, to do their 'little bit.'

So, boys, get up and clean the shoes;
And, girls, don't wait to pick and choose,
But do the work that comes to hand,
And do it well! You understand?

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall.

(Continued from page 188.)

'ALL right, old son,' said Pilling, cheerfully. 'But don't turn into a sap.'

'Should you call Henderson a sap?' asked Jimmy. 'He works hard, and he's jolly good at games, too.'

'Don't bother me with questions, Henshaw,' said Pilling. 'Can't you see I'm busy?'

He was busy with lines, which fell to his lot frequently, but which he took with the utmost good nature, and showed up to Mr. Jenkins with a sweet smile that seemed to indicate that he thoroughly enjoyed doing them. He never bore any malice over his punishments, and Mr. Jenkins had even been known to smile himself, in his own grim way, upon receiving one of his contributions.

Jimmy looked at him, scribbling away at the table in his room. 'Well, I'd rather work in school-time than out of it,' he said. 'I'm going off to play fives. Good-bye!'

So Jimmy worked hard, and earned the reputation of a sap amongst those who hated to see anybody working at all. But as he had made up his mind on the question he didn't care much. Henderson worked as hard as he did, and was not labelled 'sap.' Jimmy hoped to show himself good at games, too, when his time came, and then the label would drop off him.

Mr. Jenkins seemed to develop a worse temper than ever within a few days of the commencement of term, and his Form trembled before him. After the first day he paid no more compliments to Jimmy, or, indeed, to anybody else; and there were few who escaped some form of punishment. There arose a feeling that he was much too severe, and the boys were beginning to be sullen under the whip of his displeasure. The value of Form work was falling off, too, for discipline stretched too far spoils work instead of encouraging it.

But one morning Mr. Jenkins was not in his place in chapel, and it soon became known that he was ill with a very serious attack of gout, and might be laid up for a month at least, as had once happened before. This explained his recent ferocity, which was quickly forgiven him when its cause became known.

After a day, in which the Lower Fourth was taken by different masters, Mr. Ringrose appeared as temporary Form-master. He was a young man who had not long since gained his Fellowship at Oxford, and not many years before had been Head Boy of Whyborough School. He was one of the most brilliant successes in learning that the school had ever turned out, but there were boys who remembered him as an unmitigated sap, who had scarcely been able to preserve his own dignity as a Prefect and had been able to exercise no authority whatever.

The boys of the Lower Fourth soon took his measure. If Mr. Jenkins had not drawn the line so tight, perhaps there would not have been quite the same reaction. But from the very first morning the Form became a pandemonium, in which it was hardly possible for those who wished to do so to work at all. There were plenty who didn't wish to work at all, and these became the ruling spirits.

Work began with Repetition. A few lines of Horace had to be said by heart. The top boys said their lines perfectly, as usual. Then came one who was shaky. The next boy prompted him from a book, and although the prompting was quite audible, Mr. Ringrose took no notice of it. He sat at his desk, a poor, frail little figure, looking at his book, or at the Form, through strong spectacles, rather a pitiable object if there had been any who could have seen him in that light, quite out of place. He probably wished himself in his own quiet rooms at Oxford, where he worked at his books all day, and sometimes half the night, and thoroughly enjoyed himself; and he probably wished himself there much more strongly before morning school was over, and for many days afterwards.

The Repetition made its way down to Pilling, who had dispensed himself from learning it at all. Mr. Jenkins's habit was to put on boys anywhere in the Form, and it sometimes happened that he left one or two out. Mr. Ringrose went regularly down the Form, and after the top boys nobody said more than two lines, when he had said these he sat down, and the next boy took him up sharply. This enabled the boys towards the bottom of the Form to reckon what lines would come to them, and to learn them from their books, which, of course, they ought to have shut up at the beginning of Repetition.

But this was not enough for Pilling. He stood up sharply when his turn came, and read his lines from the book, which he had left lying open on his desk. A ripple of laughter went round the Form at this bright feat of daring, and there were murmurs of 'Good old Pills!' There were also glances at Mr. Ringrose, to see if he would actually stand such obvious defiance as this.

The poor little man made an effort. 'Say the next two lines,' he said, 'and shut your book.'

Pilling nudged Scott, who was sitting next to him, and Scott sprang to attention and quickly recited his lines, which he had now had ample time to learn.

'No, I mean the other boy,' said Mr. Ringrose. 'The boy before, who read his lines. He had no right to do that.'

'What me, sir? Read my lines, sir?' exclaimed Pilling in injured surprise.

'Yes, you,' said Mr. Ringrose. 'You mustn't read your lines. You must say them.'

Pilling dropped his air of injury. He could not have kept it up without telling a lie, which his code forbade him to do. Another idea occurred to him. 'Yes, I did read my lines, sir,' he said. 'And why? Because I hadn't learnt them, sir. If you ask me why I hadn't learnt them, sir, I will tell you. Last night, just as I was opening my Horace, there came a tap at the door of my room. My friend Scott here, who has the room with me, was doing his Latin prose. I must tell you, sir, that we both belong to Mr. Stanhope's house. It is in the High Street, on the left as you go down, next to Sherard's the boot-shop—a large red-brick house—you can't mistake it if you——'

'That will do,' interrupted Mr. Ringrose, while the Form laughed rather more unrestrainedly than before.

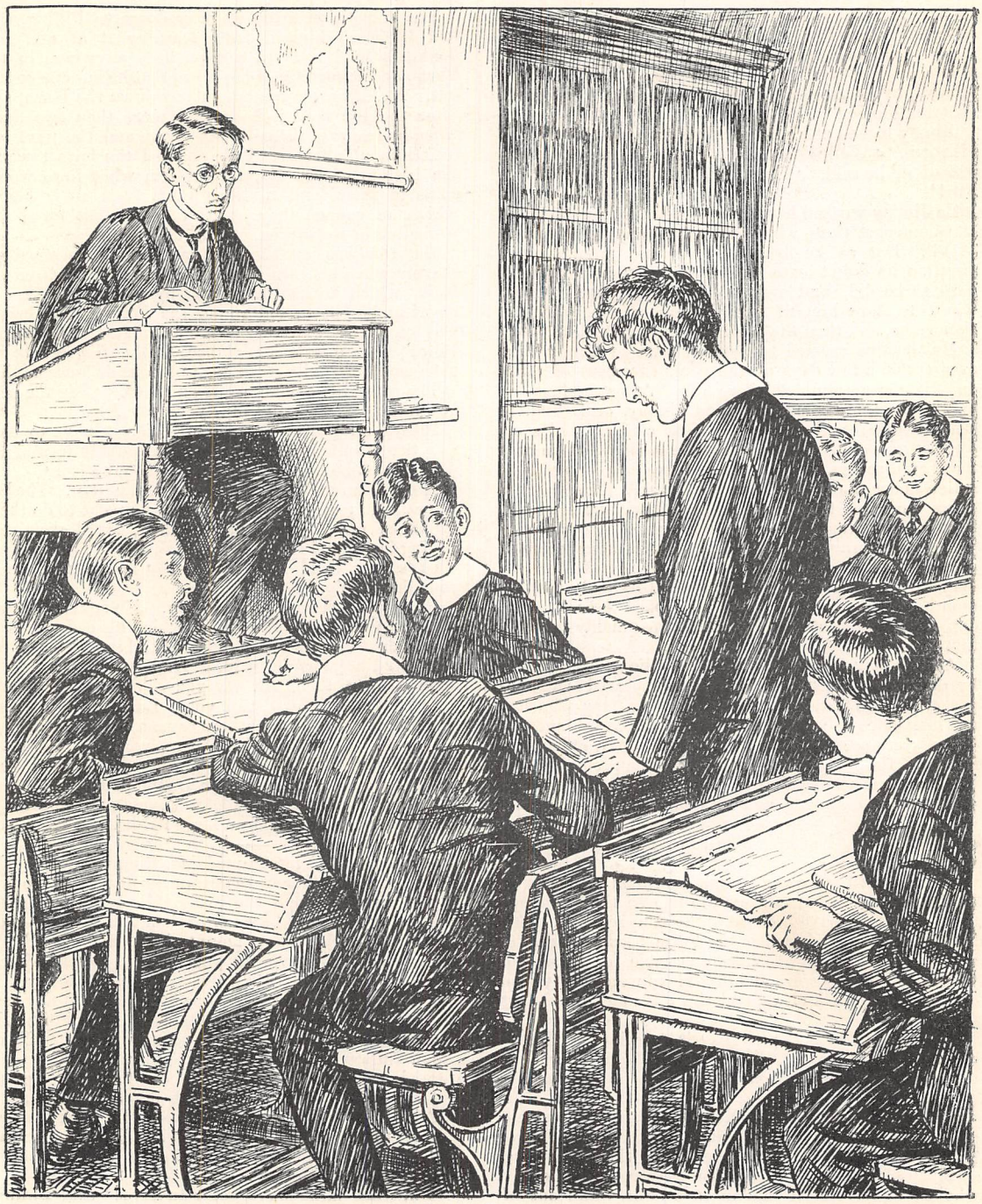
'Oh, well, sir,' said the ready Pilling, resuming his seat, 'if you won't hear my explanation, er—er—then I suppose there's nothing more to be done about it.'

'You can say anything you have to say in excuse after school,' said Mr. Ringrose. 'Go on, next boy.'

After this, it was hardly to be expected that any sort of discipline could be maintained. The Form did exactly what it liked, just keeping within the bounds at which lines would have been given, and these bounds were almost incredibly wide, for poor little Mr. Ringrose had absolutely no idea of keeping order whatever, and shut his eyes to all sorts of excesses. He even allowed Pilling to go away without giving him the further explanation that had been promised, and of course without giving him lines.

'Oh, what larks we're going to have!' said Pilling, as he walked to Stanhope's with Scott and Jimmy. 'No more work to do, Scotty dear, as long as old Ringrose stops here. My holy aunt, what larks!'

(*Continued on page* 206.)



"He read his lines from the book."

"They must master the t. rashing canvas."

HOW 'WYVERN' WON THE CUP.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Continued from page* 198.)

IT was a thirty-mile run, in the dark, and they had never sailed so large a boat; but Patterson jumped for the halyard, and although he tramped on the canvas with muddy boots, the big racing lugsail went up. *Wyvern* listed gently down, and the water bubbled along her lee side and trailed her stern in curls of foam as she gathered way. The sun had set and the breeze was freshening.

At first, it was rather fine to sit at the helm and feel the quiver of the light hull as she lurched across the languid swell; but after the moon rose the wind got cold, and the sea began to curl. Foam boiled about the bows, showers of spray leaped up, and short, splashing ridges of water raced after the boat. These got angrier; she began to roll wildly, jerking up her heavy boom, and the short seas surged forward, hissing as they broke about her waist. She was going very fast, and Elliot had hard work at the tiller. He knew what might happen if he let her gybe and bring the big sail across, and after a time felt that he had had enough.

'I think we ought to haul down a reef,' he said.

'I thought so half an hour since,' Patterson replied. 'Be careful how you bring her round.'

They felt the strength of the wind when Elliot put the helm a-lee. Now she was no longer running before it, *Wyvern* buried her side in boiling foam, and cascades of glittering water sluiced across the bows and splashed into the well. Then, as she came head-to, the big sail flapped and banged, threatening to shake out the mast. They must master the thrashing canvas, which swelled like a half-inflated balloon when they eased the halyard and the long yard came down; but the job needed strength and skill, and the boys were soaked with spray, half-daunted, and shivering.

Wyvern lay nearly head to sea, but Elliot could not keep her there. Now she luffed up with a plunge that flooded her bows, and then fell off, while the canvas filled with a bang and jerk that threatened to carry away her spars. Watkin had lost his cap, and his wet hair was plastered on his forehead, but he was comparatively calm. 'Hold on with the halyard; we'll have the tack first,' he said when the yard was lowered enough.

They seized the tackle and dragged down the inner end of the boom; but the next step was difficult, because the other end of the heavy spar projected beyond the stern.

'Topping-lift now,' said Watkin. 'Heave a bit to take the weight off the leach earing.'

They pulled up the boom, and seizing a rope beneath it dragged down the after edge of the sail, but had next to tie the reef-points, and this was worst of all. One could manage the fore part and middle, standing in the boat, but when one came to the outer edge it was needful to get up on the wet deck and lean on the boom, which alternately jerked inwards and swung out over the water. Sometimes they hung on by their toes to the narrow rail, and sometimes were hove off their feet: but they stuck to the thrashing canvas and conquered it. Then they dropped, breathless and gasping, into the cockpit and felt relieved. *Wyvern* would run safer under her shortened sail.

Patterson now took the helm, and glanced astern when the boat was on her course. Short seas with glittering tops rolled after her, and, catching her up, threw foam and spray on board abreast of the mast. He could see their hollow sides as they curled and broke; and glanced ahead, where their white-streaked backs looked smoother. 'I s'pose we ought to get the compass out,' he suggested.

'Can you steer by compass?' Elliot inquired.

'I could try,' said Patterson dubiously. 'After all, I'd like to know where we're heading. What d'you think, Watkin?'

Watkin glanced towards the land. It was not dark, for the moon was bright. Three or four miles off there was a grey blur that looked like sand dunes, with shadowy hills in the background. 'To begin with, you don't know where you *are*, and when you want to steer a straight course you must have a point to start from. That's obvious. Then if you tried to watch the compass, you'd probably gybe her and wreck us when the sail swung across. Keep her running and wait for daylight.'

He turned round, and pulling up some of the floorings put them across the cockpit with lumps of ballast on top. Then he unscrewed a plug in the deck and poured some water down. 'I'm priming the pump; we may want it soon,' he said drily when Elliot asked what he was doing.

By-and-by the sea got higher and curled worse. Astern, there was nothing but glittering lines of froth, and *Wyvern's* bows rose sharply as the waves that picked her up surged past. Then her stern sank below the level of a boiling ridge, and they waited with tingling nerves to see if it would break on board. It did not, but swept by with a roar instead, though now and then several bucketfuls of very cold water washed into the cockpit.

'Tide's turned,' said Patterson, who was very wet. 'It's running against the wind and kicking up the sea. She'd go easier if we dropped the lug and sailed her with the jib.'

'She would,' said Watkin shortly; 'but she wouldn't go ahead. We don't want to be out here longer than we can help.'

This was obvious, and although Patterson had many anxious moments he let her run. She rolled horribly as the seas overtook her, and the big boom went up until it looked as if it must lurch across with the sail and capsize the boat. His lips were set and his arms ached as he strained upon the tiller. In the meantime, the water was coming on board, and Watkin panted as he laboured at the pump. He knew they ought to haul down another reef; but this would mean a struggle, and he did not feel up to it. The worst was that if they brought the wind on the quarter to make steering safer, they would presently be driven on the beach, while to gybe the sail across and stand out for open sea was not to be thought of.

She was lurching very wildly when he took the helm, and he was soon wet with perspiration that was caused by nervous strain as much as effort; but he kept her running, and at length the eastern sky began to whiten. Then the moon got pale and a red flush appeared low down on the sea. The west was dark, but not so dark as before, and by-and-by a white streak stood out from the hazy line of beach. He knew this was the surf on the shoals round an island, and they were not far from port.

The white streak got brighter; they saw pale sandhills above it and a few white houses. Then a big iron buoy with a cage on top swept past, they plunged through a belt of angry, foaming eddies, and as Watkin changed his course the sea got smoother. 'Tide's going our way now; we're in the stream that fills the inlet,' he said with keen satisfaction.

A ray of warm sunshine fell upon the dripping boat as they ran in behind the island. Water washed about inside her, and the crew were drenched and stiff; but they had made the passage and nothing else mattered. Sailing up-channel between the sandbanks they anchored abreast of a small white town, and spent some time pumping out the boat and drying their clothes. Then a fisherman rowed them ashore, and they held a council on the pier.

(*Concluded on page* 234.)

AN ATTEMPTED HOAX.

SOME boys once thought it would be great sport if they could take in a famous naturalist. They killed a centipede, and then glued on to it a beetle's head, the wings of a butterfly, and the legs of a grasshopper. They packed it in a box and took it to the great man.

'We found it in the fields,' they told him. 'Can you tell us what it is?'

'Ah! Did it hum when you caught it?'

'Oh, yes, sir,' they answered. 'It hummed like anything.'

'Then,' said the naturalist, 'it is undoubtedly a hum-bug.'

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 195.)

CHAPTER XI.

DICK and Sandy had absolutely no chance of escape. The Jews tripped them up and knelt upon their backs as they lay face downward in the sand, gasping and breathless. The boys struggled valiantly; but in a minute their hands were tied behind them, and their legs secured tightly below the knees. Then they were turned upon their backs, and handfuls of filthy rags thrust into their mouths to act as gags, whilst the boy Abbas jeered at them in his abominable mixture of French and Arabic.

'Little fools, to think that you would escape! My father has a use for you—and here you are!'

The old Jew chuckled and grinned, bending himself double and rubbing his dirty hands. Plainly, the two reckoned the retaking of Dick and Sandy as a great triumph.

Presently Abbas led forward a camel which had been browsing on some prickly shrubs at a short distance away. It was loaded with two great packs, one on either side, and into these canvas covered paniers the Jews thrust the boys roughly, like so much merchandise. Cloths were thrown over their heads, completely covering them, and they could hear and see nothing of what passed, with any exactness. From the muffled noises and raucous orders, the boys judged that Levi and Abbas had mounted upon donkeys, and presently the camel began to move forward in the lollopping fashion of its kind.

It needs long practice, in any case, to accustom one to the paces of a camel, and to the boys, crouched in a cramped position in the paniers, the motion was excruciatingly painful. Their bonds were very tight, their heads ached unbearably, they had not even the consolation of being able to talk to each other.

To Dick, it really seemed as though all their fine hopes had vanished into thin air. They had lost their new and powerful friend almost as soon as he was found; for what possible chance was there that he might be able to trace them, even if he made the attempt? They had lost the help which might well have led to their father's release, and the future looked black as night before them.

Yet, after all, it was not the future which troubled Dick overmuch; the horrors of the present outweighed all else.

Presently, the boy must have fallen into a state half sleep, half stupor: he knew no more until rough hands seized him and lifted him out of the pack, letting him fall limply to the ground.

Dick realised presently that his hands and legs had been untied, and the gag removed from his mouth; but for some considerable time he was too stiff and numbed to move. At last Sandy's voice, very shaky and frightened, roused him.

'Dick—I'm here. Do talk to me,' the younger boy said unsteadily, and Dick, turning his head, found that his brother had rolled himself close up beside him.

It was a great comfort to be together again, and for some time they talked in whispers. The camel, squatting near, ate from a cloth laid on the ground before it, and close by the donkeys were tethered to a stake driven into the ground. The Jews were bending over a tiny fire, which they had kindled at a few paces away, and from time to time they glanced watchfully at their prisoners.

All round was sand—nothing but sand as far as the eye could see. The scene was just growing clear in the cold light of dawn; the stars were still showing faintly in a dim blue sky. The smoke from the fire rose in a white spiral, and its faint crackling was the only sound which broke the intense stillness.

Presently Abbas came towards the boys with a wooden bowl in his hands. He set it down between them, and they saw that it contained a stew of rancid-smelling mutton, yellow with saffron. But by this time Dick and Sandy were too hungry to be disturbed by details; they sat up and ate ravenously all that was set before them.

After this the Jews erected a primitive tent, into which they crept, making the boys lie between them; whilst Abbas explained with gruesome details, the awful fate which would await them if they again attempted to escape.

Indeed, the boys no longer dreamt of such a thing. What could they do, wandering alone in the desert, without food or drink, or any means of guessing their path?

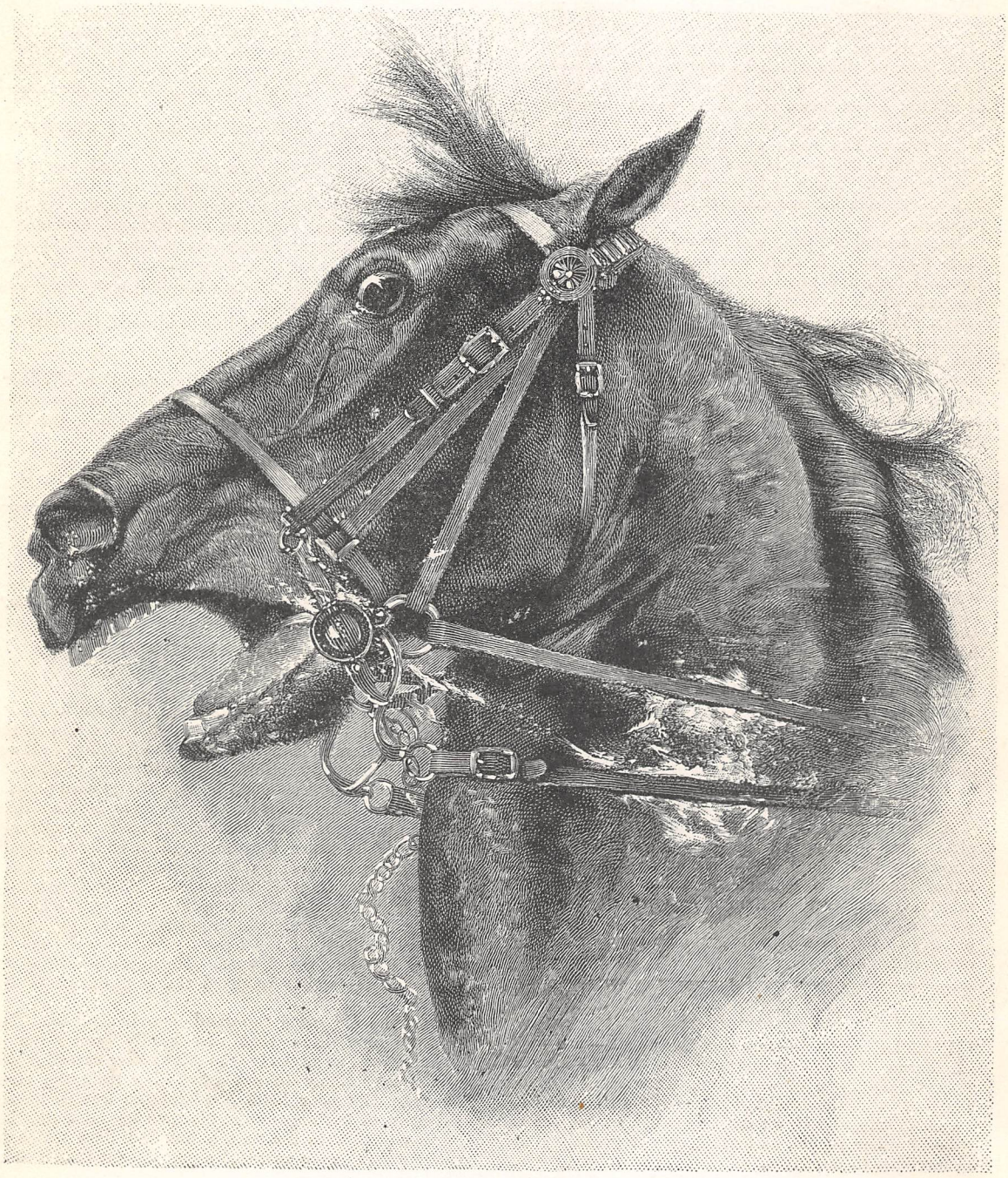
They lay for many hours in the stuffy tent, which grew ever hotter as the sun rose higher in the sky, until it seemed entirely airless. Levi snored abominably, and Abbas tossed incessantly from side to side; so that the boys were glad when, late in the afternoon, the Jews struck their camp, and set out once more.

"The Jews thrust the boys roughly into the paniers."

Dick and Sandy were not tied again. Plainly Levi was satisfied that they could not escape. Sometimes they rode in the camel's packs, sometimes they walked or ran beside the little caravan.

All attempts to discover where their journey would end were in vain. Levi only answered their questionings with fierce grunts, whilst Abbas replied evasively that in good time his father would tell them. With this they were obliged to be satisfied.

(*Continued on page* 210.)



HEAD OF AN ARAB CHARGER.

(Engraved on Wood.)

THE ECTON COPPER MINE.

IN the year 1739, or about that date, a Cornish miner, who was passing over Ecton Hill, near Wetton, in the northern part of Staffordshire, accidentally picked up a piece of stone which he recognised as copper ore. The discovery led to the formation of a company of mining adventurers, like those which then worked the Cornish mines, and these men set to work to open out a mine. The work was difficult, and the sum of thirteen thousand pounds was spent before any profits were realised. There is little wonder, therefore, that the adventurers became disheartened, and gave up the attempt.

But a second company was formed, and this was soon more fortunate. A shaft was sunk to a depth of six hundred feet, and great quantities of copper ore were reached, which increased as the workings were carried lower. The copper was found to be disposed in an unusual manner. It did not run in ramifying veins, but sank straight down, and widened out into the shape of a bell. To make the working of the mine easier, and perhaps to carry off the drainage, an adit, or horizontal shaft, was run in at the base of the hill, which was about seven hundred feet high.

The original adventurers took the ground on lease from the Duke of Devonshire, who was the owner. When the lease expired he took over the works, and carried them on for his own profit. The mine was believed to be one of the richest, if not quite the richest, of the copper mines in the world. For several years it yielded a profit of eight or ten thousand pounds a year. In 1761 the practice of sheathing wooden men-of-war with copper was commenced. The experiment was not at first a great success, owing to the use of iron bolts, which were seriously oxidised and corroded by the sea water, so that the sheets fell off. Copper bolts were substituted for iron ones, and this defect was remedied. About the year 1780, when we were at war with France, there was a great demand for copper for sheathing and for bolts, and the profits of the Ecton mine were said to amount to thirty thousand pounds in one year. Report says that the Crescent at Buxton was built with the profits from this mine.

A great number of men and women and of boys and girls were employed in the mine. Their wages were miserably low, the men receiving a shilling for six hours' labour. Of course, the value of money was relatively greater then than it is now, but the wages were, nevertheless, poor. The mine was eventually exhausted, and for a very long time no copper has been obtained from it.

W. A. ATKINSON.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE.

TRIALS ignored—not thought about—are easily borne. So, if only for our own sake, we are wise if we make little of our troubles and much of our mercies. But the bright side is also the right and the unselfish side, and if we *must* grumble, let us, for the sake of other people, at least keep our groanings and grumblings to ourselves.

A lady once said to her husband, 'I have been thinking over our circumstances, and I have resolved to be always very patient and submissive.'

'Well,' said her husband, 'that is a good resolution. Now let us think what we have got to submit to. In the first place, we have a home; I think we can, without much difficulty, submit to *that* trial. Secondly, we have many comforts; we will submit to that. Thirdly, we have quite a multitude of good and faithful friends; we can put up with that. Fourthly, we have each other. *I*, at any rate, most willingly and gladly submit to *that!* Fifthly, we have God to take care of us. Then——'

'Oh, *do* stop!' exclaimed the lady; 'I will say no more about "submission."'

A friend of Wilberforce's one day found him very much worried and flurried, hunting for an important dispatch which he had unfortunately mislaid. He had put off the search until the last moment, and now a member of the royal family was waiting for the paper. Suddenly there arose a great commotion in the nursery overhead, where Wilberforce's children were beginning to play some noisy game.

'Surely now,' said the visitor to himself, 'he will for once lose his temper?'

Not a bit of it!

'What a blessing those dear children are!' said Wilberforce to his friend. 'What a relief it is, in the midst of one's worries, to hear their voices, and know that they are well!'

That, indeed, was looking on the bright side.

E. D.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By ARCHIBALD MARSHALL,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 199.)

CHAPTER VII.

THINGS went rapidly from bad to worse in Lower Fourth. What had happened at Repetition on the first day was mild compared with the flouting of all authority that rapidly followed, when it became plain that scarcely anything that could be done would earn punishment. It was true that after a short time he dealt out lines with an unsparing hand, but nobody took any notice of them. If he asked for them, which he by no means always did, he could always be put off with a long-winded excuse, founded on the idea of Pilling's narrative on the first day. It was extraordinary the stories he was called upon to listen to, wandering off into absurd details that had not the least bearing upon the subject he was being informed upon. He never heard the end of any of them, but remitted the punishment in due course.

Once he did get a thousand lines handed in. This was an imposition that was hardly ever given at Whyborough, as anybody who might have earned it was much more likely to get a swishing from the Head Master. But poor little Mr. Ringrose was so incompetent in everything, except his own special work, that he was unable to see that a hundred lines which he could enforce were more of a punishment than a thousand which he couldn't.

One of the big athletic boys, named Weaver, who remained like a sediment at the bottom of whatever Form he was put into, enjoyed himself particularly in the conditions to which Lower Fourth had been brought.

He and the other boys like him took charge of everything, and spent their time in school in devising new forms of amusement for the rest. Weaver developed an awkward cough, which presently became rather like the crow of a cock. It then became still more like the crow of a cock, and not like a cough at all, until finally one might have thought that Lower Fourth was a farmyard instead of a schoolroom, so frequent were Weaver's crows, and so ready were the hen-like cackles with which they were greeted.

At last Mr. Ringrose said: 'If you make that noise again, Weaver, I shall give you an imposition.'

Weaver, of course, explained indignantly that he couldn't help coughing. He ended up his explanation with a paroxysm in support of it, and the paroxysm itself ended in a cock-a-doodle-do, which was so loud and so unashamedly realistic that even the saps shook with laughter, and the rest of the Form rolled about helplessly in its merriment.

When the noise had somewhat subsided, Mr. Ringrose could be heard ordering Weaver to do him a thousand lines, and threatening the whole Form with detention if they did not behave themselves. Somewhat to the surprise of the rest, Weaver accepted his punishment, though he said that it was most unfair, and that he should tell the School Doctor that he wasn't allowed to clear his throat in school, and no doubt he should die of consumption, and his death would be entirely due to Mr. Ringrose. He made a little speech upon the subject, and pictured himself lying in his lonely grave under the daisies, and Mr. Ringrose coming to shed a tear of remorse over it, and ended up: 'I expect the thousand lines will finish me, sir, but I'll do them, so that you may have something to remember me by when I'm gone.' Then he affected to be overcome with sobs, which became louder and louder as he sat down, and finally ended in another crow.

The thousand lines were shown up at evening school. During the afternoon Weaver might have been observed playing a fine game as half-back in Lower Choices, and had certainly had no time to write a thousand lines of Virgil. He seemed to have written fifty, however, for the first sheet of paper, of which there were between twenty and thirty, was inscribed with his own immature signature, and the lines that followed were in the same hand. The lines on the other sheets were in all sorts of different hands. Weaver had dealt out the sheets, and collected a subscription of forty or fifty lines from his numerous friends and acquaintances, who for the first time in their lives found themselves enjoying this form of exercise.

Mr. Ringrose accepted the lines, and actually said that he hoped this punishment would be a lesson to Weaver. Weaver had hard work to prevent himself emitting another crow, but held out his hand for the bundle of papers to be given back to him again, as if it were the most natural thing in the world for boys to get lines returned to them. And Mr. Ringrose actually did hand them back to him. 'It's like taking half-a-crown off a baby,' said Pilling, as Weaver returned to his seat in triumph.

After that, there were always lines ready for Mr. Ringrose when he gave them. They were shown up with the utmost promptitude, and were then handed back, and kept for the next occasion. Did he never guess that they were always the same lines, with an occasional freshening up of the first page, or was he too timid to take objection? With so remarkable an inability to deal with the average Lower boy, it would be difficult to say exactly how much he understood and how much he didn't. But his own experience as a boy certainly would not have helped him, for he had never earned a punishment during the whole of his schooltime at Whyborough, and had otherwise remained quite outside the ordinary course of life there, except where it touched the work of the school.

It was not many days before the state of anarchy at which Lower Fourth had arrived became something of a public scandal. The whole school was laughing at the tales of what was happening there. The Prefects who brought round the absence book for the Form Masters to sign every morning carried away a lively impression of their reception in Lower Fourth, and the noise in the room sometimes rose so high that on two occasions Mr. Stanhope, whose room was next door, sent in to request that it might be stopped. If he had not been the most easy-going of all the regular masters the acute disturbance would certainly have ended sooner than it did; but it was hardly to be expected that it could last with impunity for very long, and the catastrophe came on the fifth morning.

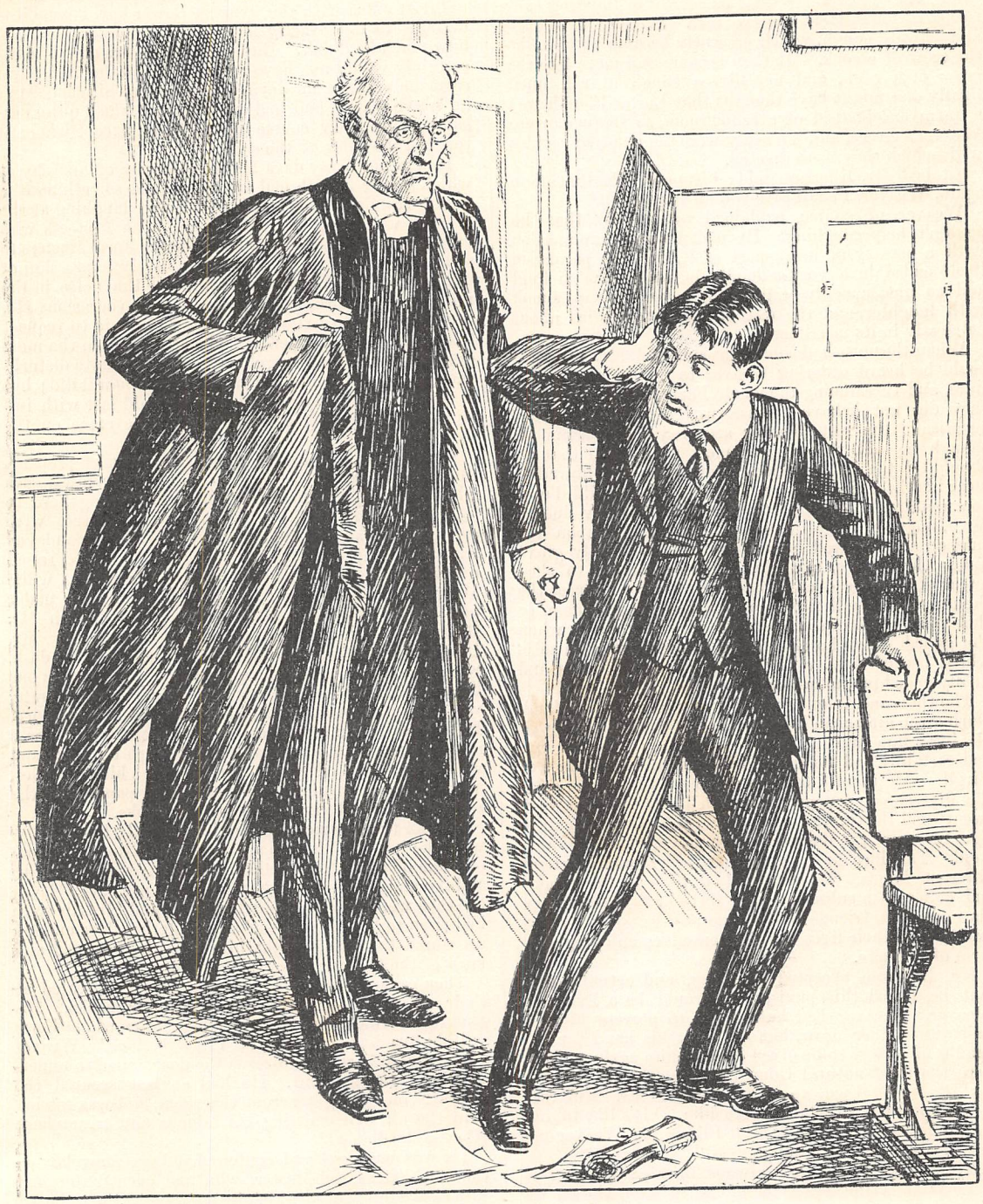
It was in second lesson, when some sort of preparation was in progress. The few—the very few—boys who were sticking to their work were trying hard to lose themselves in it, while most of the rest were engaged in a game of hunt the slipper. This was played with a tied-up exercise book, which was passed round under the desks or thrown across the room, while Weaver, who had initiated it, dashed to and fro under pretence of collecting Latin verse papers, which Mr. Ringrose had incautiously requested him to do. Mr. Ringrose himself was correcting other papers at his desk, with the boys who had done them, calling them up one by one. He looked up now and then to remonstrate, when the noise became too insistent even for his patience. But the chief fun of the game was to pretend that it was not going on. A sharp watch was kept on him, and whenever he looked up and peered through his spectacles, Weaver was immediately busy collecting papers, and the rest appeared to be immersed in their books.

At last there came a more than usually lively rally, with the 'slipper' thrown skilfully across the room from one line of desks to the other, and Weaver scurrying to and fro and dropping for the moment all pretence. Even the saps were watching and laughing, and Mr. Ringrose had risen to his seat and was administering lines enough all round to have brought him the whole Æneid and most of the Georgics if he could get them done.

Then came a sudden hush. All the boys seated at their desks bent their heads over their books. Mr. Ringrose's voice was heard saying, 'The whole Form will do five hundred lines of Virgil besides.' Weaver alone, whose back was towards the door, failed to understand for the moment. He had at last secured the 'slipper' on its flight across the room, and was tossing it in the air, and emitting his famous and triumphant 'Cock-a-doodle-do!'

He was surprised and confounded by a sharp box on the ear. The Head Master, who had opened the door just at the moment at which he had caught the 'slipper.' had made three strides into the middle of the room and administered that rare form of rebuke as an earnest of what might be expected of him in the future.

(*Continued on page* 214.)



"He was surprised by a sharp box on the ear."

CHATTERBOX.

WHO FORGOT THE PETROL?

"They found the old man on the verge of a deep hole."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 204.)

IT seemed to Dick and Sandy as though that journey would never come to an end. Day after day they travelled in the same manner, camping during the hottest hours of noon and for part of each night. Sometimes they passed through villages, whose inhabitants eyed them askance. Away to their right mountains rose; but mostly their way led through dry and desert places, where the only trees were sapless and covered with thorns.

Then, after nearly a fortnight, there came a day when things looked brighter. There was a cool breeze to temper the sun's heat, and the country had become pretty and fertile, with streams running through fields of tobacco and maize.

It seemed as though the beauty of the day had its effect even upon the morose old Jew. He grinned and chuckled, wagging his grimy beard, and muttering to himself half aloud.

'Do you hear what the old beast is mumbling?' Sandy spoke in an undertone. 'He said, "good—good—soon shall we make an end—soon shall I know." I wonder what he meant. I hope it's the end of the journey we're getting to, Sandy.'

'So do I!' the younger boy answered fervently. 'Whatever happens next, it can't be worse than dragging on and on like this!'

Which showed Sandy's ignorance. There were plenty of worse fates which might be in store for them, as he was soon to learn.

Abbas seemed scarcely less pleased and excited, and he was rather more communicative.

'Soon you will know what my father desires of you,' he said, and added, almost kindly, for the Jew boy was not ill-natured in his way: 'And then will he let you go about your business, where you will.'

Here was good news! Dick's and Sandy's spirits rose at a bound. They began to plan together what their next course should be, when the Jew's business was completed. For, after all, what could the old man want of them? Probably nothing of great importance.

They did not, as usual, camp at noon, but pushed on all through the heat of the day. Their way led them now directly towards the mountains, which they had been skirting fairly closely all the day before. Soon they were amongst the foothills, whilst the higher peaks showed rose-colour and purple against the sky. Straggling villages nestled here and there in folds of the hills, with fields planted in steps or terraces.

'What does that white dome-shaped sort of thing up on the hill remind you of, Dick?' Sandy asked perplexedly, and the elder boy answered promptly:

'Why, it's exactly like the picture of the "whited sepulchre" in the big Bible Mother used to show us on Sundays. Don't you remember?—but of course you wouldn't, you were too small.' An assertion which, however true, made Sandy feel somewhat aggrieved; because, whatever Dick might say, he did remember the white dome very plainly.

Presently Levi began to peer from side to side as though searching, his sharp nose and prying attitude giving him somewhat of the appearance of a bird of prey. He returned snappish answers to Abbas's questions; plainly the old fellow was disturbed and anxious.

Then suddenly his face cleared, and he gave a hoarse, chuckling sound of satisfaction. He scuttled across an open space towards a clump of low-growing trees, parting the branches and worming his way between them out of sight. After a moment he reappeared, waving his arms and beckoning to the rest of the party in great excitement.

Leading the camel and donkeys, Abbas pushed across the clearing towards his father. The young Jew tethered the animals to one of the low trees and plunged into the thicket, followed by Dick and Sandy.

They heard Levi's chuckling laugh before they saw him, and found the old man rubbing his hands triumphantly on the verge of a deep hole, the mouth of which was partly overgrown with creepers and bushes. The broken, sandy sides were very steep; Dick, peering down, could see that it must be at least twenty feet in depth, but the trees grew so thickly about it that the bottom was hidden in shadows.

Suddenly the old Jew began to move with nervous speed. He pushed his way out to where the beasts were tethered, and returned in a moment carrying something which, unrolled, proved to be a rope ladder. This, with trembling fingers, he fastened to a tree which grew close to the mouth of the pit, and flung it down. Afterwards, by gestures and disjointed Arabic words, he signified to Dick and Sandy that they were to descend.

For a moment the boys hesitated, naturally enough. Then Dick shrugged his shoulders and sat down upon the edge of the hole. 'We'd better go down,' he said to Sandy. 'It's not worth while putting the old beast's back up by refusing.'

He climbed down slowly, his face turned towards the side of the pit. Sandy followed promptly, and much more easily, since Dick was at the bottom to steady the ladder. Immediately afterwards the old Jew followed, groaning and complaining.

The boys' eyes became accustomed almost at once to the dusk. They found themselves ankle-deep in soft sand at the bottom of a circular pit perhaps twenty-five feet deep and fifteen across. They had no time to notice more before Levi blundered down beside them, and began fumbling with the flint and steel which he carried in his girdle.

Presently he had lighted a torch of resin-soaked wood; a yellow flame flickered up, and the boys saw the Jew's features, strained and eager, and the face of Abbas, as he peered curiously over the rim of the pit above their heads.

Levi thrust the torch into Dick's hands and himself fell upon his knees. With a small shovel, which he produced, rather like a conjuror, from the recesses of his robe, he began to dig in the loose sand with feverish haste.

For some moments there was no sound except the old man's quickened breath and the crackling of the burning wood. Then, of a sudden, the Jew gave another hoarse gasp of excitement and, dropping the shovel, began to thrust aside the sand with his hands.

He motioned to Dick to hold the torch nearer, and the boy saw that a slab of stone had been exposed to view.

Sandy had fallen on his knees, peering under Dick's arm. Suddenly he gave a queer little stifled cry. 'Dick—don't you see?' he gasped under his breath.

'There are figures and things cut on it—don't you understand?'

'Do you mean——' began the elder boy; but Sandy interrupted him almost fiercely. 'Of course I do! That's why I remembered the white tomb-thing—the book said all about it in the directions how to find the pit. It *is* the pit, Dick—it is! And this is *our* stone!'

(*Continued on page* 219.)

THE PERPETUAL RAVEN.

IN a cage at a certain town in Europe there is always a raven. One has been there for centuries, and thereby hangs a tale.

The reason that a raven is always there is that once upon a time, far back in the Middle Ages, a knight of the town condemned to death an innocent man.

One day Thilo—that was the knight's name—was very angry because some valuable jewels had disappeared from his room. Naturally, he thought that they had been stolen, and for some reason or another he felt sure that a certain manservant of his was the thief. When the man was accused of the crime, he earnestly protested his innocence. Thilo did not believe him, and said that he should die. According to the story, the servant told his master: 'If you kill me unjustly, you will see that after my death I shall raise my arms above my shoulders. Then, perhaps, you will believe me!'

In spite of all his pleadings, he was beheaded in the courtyard, and tradition says that the dead man *did* raise his arms above his shoulders.

Several months after this execution, the missing jewels were discovered in a raven's nest. Thilo, shocked to find that he had made such a sad mistake, ordered that, for all time, a raven should be kept in the courtyard, and his order has been obeyed right up to the present day. Thus the raven in that cage is a perpetual warning against quickness of temper and hasty judgment.

THE FURY.

AN ancient King had a fancy for going about in disguise. In a certain street of his chief city there were two blacksmiths' shops, one opposite the other. One day the King rode up to one of these shops to have his horse's shoe tightened. The daughter of the other blacksmith, a rude, vulgar woman, seeing from her window a very plain little man on horseback going to the rival's shop, made a horrible face at him, putting out her tongue as far as she could.

The King saw this performance, of which he took no notice at the time. But shortly afterwards he called together the wood-carvers of the city, to whom he offered a prize of money for the most hideous fury's head which they could make. As well as he could remember it, he described the ugly face of the blacksmith's daughter as it appeared when she put out her tongue at him.

A few days later, the woman was overjoyed to see the King's State carriage stopping at her father's door. Great was her surprise when there stepped out of it the plain little man whom she had seen at the shop opposite. And great was her horror when she saw that he was followed by a man bearing a fury's head.

By the King's order, this dreadful thing was nailed over the door. There it remained, an abiding object-lesson on the ugliness of jealousy and petty spite. But if the blacksmith's daughter was spiteful, so also was the King!

TRUANTS.

A LITTLE white house in a garden stood,
And green were its shutters of painted wood;
Wide were its windows, and open its door,
And brothers and sisters it held—just four;
Just two little girls and two little boys.
Trees were their playmates, and flowers their toys;
They took it in turns to work and to play,
Some keeping house, and some holiday.
'The Winds,' their name, and the cottage, their nest—
The 'North' and the 'South,' the 'East' and the 'West.'

Now two little people wandered one day
Through a broken fence, down the broad highway
Where the little white house in its garden stood,
And they peeped through the doorway—as children would.
Mary peeped first—'Jack, it's empty!' cried she.
'No,' whistled the North Wind, 'it's *full*—of me!
I'm off for a frolic, perhaps you'll come too?'
And they answered, together, 'Suppose we do!'
Then off they sped, in and out, up and down,
Till the air was clouded with thistledown,
Till heads of tall poppies were emptied of seeds,
And the garden a desert of tangled weeds.
Then they halted, breathless, the tired three,
At the root of a gnarled old apple-tree.
The North Wind rose and he shook a branch,
And down there tumbled an avalanche
Of big rosy apples for Mary and Jack;
Their skins were red and their pips were black;
The fruit was as ripe as ripe could be
That the North Wind shook from the apple-tree;
They filled their pockets and home they sped.
'Where have you been to?' Nursie said.
'To visit the North Wind,' Jack replied—
'In a dear little house, and we've been inside;
We've peeped in his attic, and searched in his sheds,
And romped in his garden—all over the beds;
We've eaten his apples, and played "Hide and seek"—
We shall call on the other three Winds next week.'
But Nurse only answered, 'You mustn't tell fibs—
Tea's on the table—come, put on your bibs.'

LILIAN HOLMES.

EYES THAT SEE:

THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.

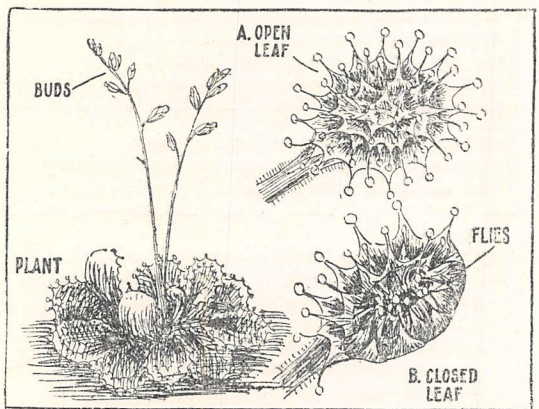
VII.—THE COURSE OF MY STREAM.

THIS morning I was leaning over a little bridge in my beloved Wales, idly watching a tiny stream making its way down to the sea. Suddenly it struck me that it would be rather interesting to find the origin of that little stream, and follow it down to the sea, noting as I went anything I might see to interest you.

So this afternoon I have done it. I am now sitting on a rock near where my stream loses itself in the great sea. I have had a long but very interesting trudge, and have come across plenty of things about which I would love to tell you, but space will only allow of quite a few, so I will pick out the most interesting.

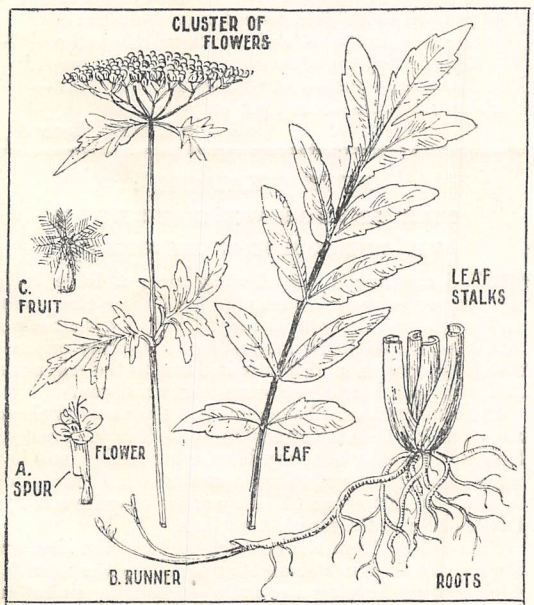
I started up from the road where I had the idea, and, after about an hour's scramble up and up the mountain side, always keeping my little stream in sight and noticing that it was getting smaller and smaller, I came at last to a very tiny waterfall. It was so small that

you could not really *see* it, but only *hear* the water coming over the edge and trickling down among the mosses and ferns, making a little tinkling sound. I scrambled up above this ledge and found myself on the edge of a large bog, which stretches over acres of more or less flat ground—a small table-land, in fact.



1. SUNDEW

I had to walk carefully, selecting what I knew by experience were safe patches. The ground was everywhere covered with growth of various kinds, bog-plants of many varieties, among which were, of course, those two companions of which I told you in my article about the mountain-side—I mean Ivy-leaved Campanula and Bog Pimpernel. There was Bog Asphodel and Cotton Grass in plenty. But the one I select to describe now is the Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*). In fig. 1, I show you a tiny plant of it. It

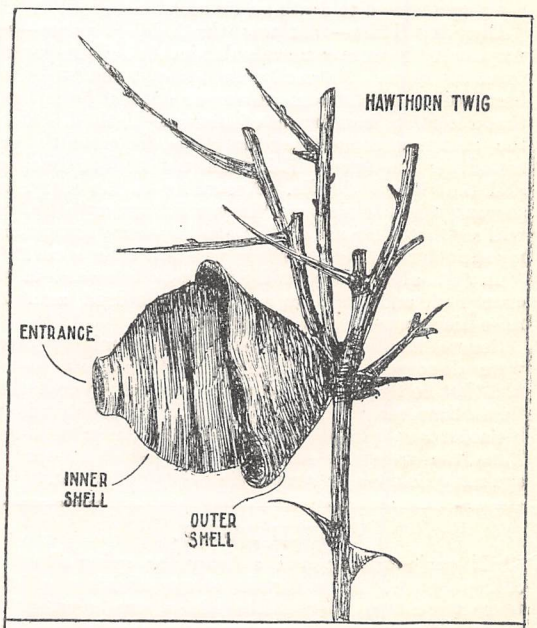


2. ALL HEAL

is very noticeable, because its general colour is red, the plants growing in colonies, and making red patches in the bog. Most of the plants here have done flowering, but I have found this one, which you see has a spray of buds. One strange thing about this plant is that you rarely catch it with its flowers open. I have hunted heaps of times and never yet found a flower really wide open.

But the leaves are the most interesting part, because they *eat insects!* That is to say, they drown insects, and, having extracted out of them all the nourishment they can, they then let the tiny dead bodies blow away!

At A, I show you an enlarged leaf open wide. You see it is covered with hairs, on the ends of which are tiny drops of sticky fluid. (These drops give the plant the name of Sundew.) When a tiny fly is



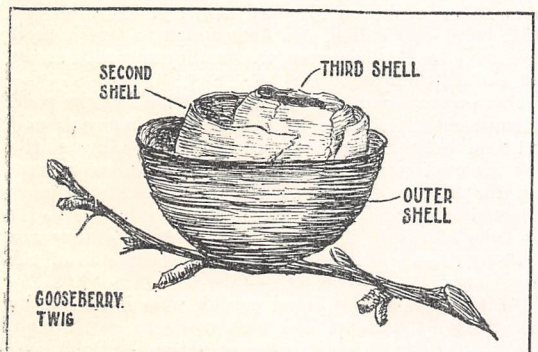
3. NEST OF BUSH WASP IN HAWTHORN TREE

attracted by the 'dew' he gets fairly drowned in this fluid, for he cannot get away—he is so gummed up; and within ten minutes of his arrival those hairs close down on him, as shown at B, and finish him off! About two days later the hairs release the body, having done with it, and are then ready for the next, please! And there is no deceiving them either, for they only close over suitable food, for I have tried them with other things, and the hairs refuse to move. Now, isn't that a curious and interesting plant?

Ah! the wonderful ferns and mosses on that little ledge where my stream begins to trickle! Great fronds of bracken and male fern in all the glory of their freedom! The water is washing away all the earth from the roots of a Mountain Ash; only a small tree, but I am sure it must be very old, for its trunk is knotted and gnarled, having withstood many a blast from the open sea in this exposed position.

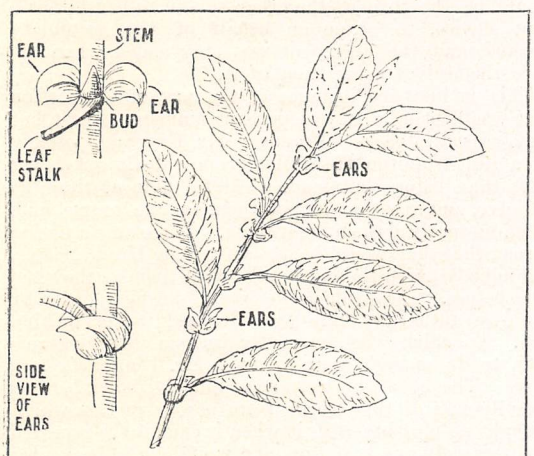
A little lower, on one side of the stream (I could step

across it here!) I found several plants of All-Heal, a very pale, flesh-pink Valerian. I was interested to find it, because I know it to be a valuable herb in medicine. When you hear people talk of the herb, Valerian, do not mix it up with the one I told you about on the railway embankment (page 180), because it



4. NEST OF BUSH WASP ON TWIG OF GOOSEBERRY

is not the same; it is only a relation. In fig. 2, I show you a spray of flowers, a leaf, and a root. The flowers, you see, are carried in a flat group, quite unlike our other friend. They have only a tiny spur, which I show in my enlarged drawing of a single flower (A), and the leaves are quite different. Also, the plants increase by runners (like strawberries), one of which I show at B. The fruits, too, are very pretty, being like tiny umbrellas (C). The roots are the parts wanted by the chemists.



5. EARED WILLOW

It was just here that I noticed a number of wasps flying about, and to my surprise they went to the *stream*. Then I discovered I was close to a bush-wasp's nest, only, instead of building it in a bush or tree, they had built it under the turf at the edge of the stream—in the bank, really.

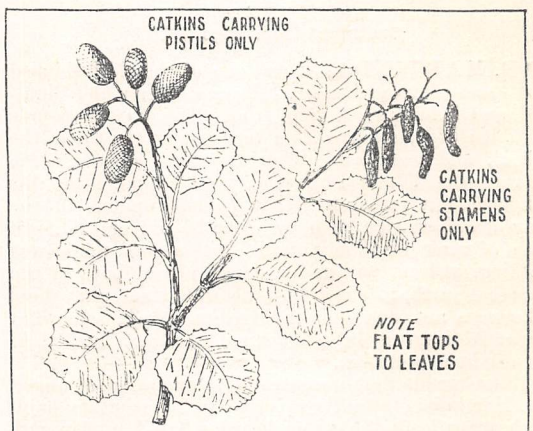
Have you ever seen a bush-wasp's nest? In fig. 3, I give you a sketch of one I found a little lower down the stream in a hawthorn-bush. This will help you to understand the one in the bank. It is built of rotten wood, which the working wasps make into a kind of thick paste with a fluid they can put forth. They apply it in layers, making a very thin, papery shell. This one on the hawthorn has an outer layer partly built. The one in the bank must have several shells, for it is quite eight inches across. In fig. 4, I show you yet another I found in the neighbourhood, on a gooseberry-bush. This is at an earlier stage.

Of course one must not interfere with these nests if they are occupied, but these two had been left for some reason, so I am taking them home. The structure is of a greyish colour and is ever so thin. Inside you can see the cells prepared for the reception of the inmates. I watched the one by the stream for a long time, seeing the wasps going in and out at the entrance, all as busy as bees.

My little stream was getting quite a respectable size, and came tumbling down the mountain-side over and between the rocks, making a channel for itself as it went.

I found Red Rattle in patches of crimson. Brooklime was in the mud, its forget-me-not blue flowers being very attractive. Down where the stream crossed the road the little bridge is lined with tiny ferns and mosses of many kinds.

On the other side of the road my stream forms a boundary between two fields, where cattle gladly refresh



6. ALDER

themselves from its cool waters. Then it comes out into a little glade composed largely of Eared Willows and Alders, both trees worth noticing. Fig. 5 shows you a twig of Eared Willow. You see the leaf-like stipules which give it its name—and very quaint they are. Fig. 6 is a twig of Alder, showing its leaves and the two forms of catkins which are characteristic of this tree.

My little stream has in this glade been joined by a brother from another direction, and together they chattered down to the sea.

Here, as I sit on the beach, the stream has spread out, and it comes trickling down among the boulders with

just the least whispering chatter, and further down it has cut little ruts in the sand, and then it joins the sea. You can, on such a peaceful day as this, see where that little stream is mixing with the sea, for a distinct path is visible—out, and out, until it loses itself in the waves of the great sea.

Now, this has really been a lesson in geography, and one which I advise you to try for yourselves when you get the chance. E. M. Barlow.

ROOM FOR ALL.

According to the calculations of a clever man, the ground occupied by the County of London could accommodate nearly all the inhabitants of the earth. The whole population of Australia could easily find room in Battersea Park, and Hyde Park could accommodate all the Canadians. Buckingham Palace and its grounds of fifty acres could hold the New Zealanders, though they might find themselves rather crowded. Epping Forest, carefully packed, might *almost* hold the population of Russia, and it is said that the whole French nation could stand in our beautiful Richmond Park.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 207.)

Dr. Martindale was one of the old-fashioned sort of Head Master. He was elderly and dignified, and held himself aloof from all social intercourse with his boys, except with a very few at the top of the school, and even with them he never unbent. He was respected and somewhat feared, and made his influence felt rather by what he left undone in the way of exhortation than by what he did or said. In case of rank insubordination of this sort there was nothing, at least within the experience of boys of the Lower Fourth, to show how he would act, and those who were not too deeply involved to take a somewhat impartial interest in what should follow, held their breath in expectation.

But after his first uncontrollable explosion of anger, Dr. Martindale instantly reverted to his usual icy habit of bearing himself. 'You heard what Mr. Ringrose said. The lines will be shown up to me on Saturday evening. Weaver will come to me after morning school. The whole Form will do two hours' extra work, in the afternoons, every day next week.'

He strode out of the room, his gown floating behind him. Such a hush came over the room as it had not known since the departure of Mr. Jenkins. Even Weaver slunk to his place and forgot to finish collecting the papers, for which purpose he had left it.

Weaver was swished. Perhaps it would have been better if the whole Form had been. Their lives during the next ten days were a burden to them. All spare time till the end of the week was taken up with their lines. On Sunday there was a breathing-space, but from the next day onwards they had to work as they had never worked, even for Mr. Jenkins. For the Head Master himself took them during the two hours of extra school, and all the work that had been left undone since Mr. Jenkins had left them had to be done again, and done properly. The Head Master never alluded to the cause of their detention, and left the Form room at the end of the last extra lesson on Saturday afternoon as if he were their ordinary Form Master and would meet them again on Monday morning. But he left them jaded and sullen, and determined to wreak their vengeance on Mr. Ringrose, whom they regarded as the cause of all their troubles.

There was no more open insubordination, but the poor, incompetent little man's lot was more unhappy than it had been before. The ingenuity of the leading spirits was directed into new channels. Careful traps were laid for him to fall into. He was invited to ignore accepted rules and regulations, and when he did so for the sake of easing his heavy task, a great outcry was made by those appointed to look after that side of the operations.

Pilling, who had suffered considerable irritation by the strenuous work he had been made to go through, was the leader in these new exercises. 'Don't you think, sir,' he would say, 'that we should get on better if we read the whole lesson through in Latin before we began to translate it.'

'I don't think so,' Mr. Ringrose would reply, mildly. 'Go on, first boy, in the ordinary way.'

'Oh, but, sir!' from Pilling, 'it would make the whole thing so much more interesting if we read it all through first.'

Mr. Ringrose would argue the point, instead of insisting sharply, and Pilling, perhaps helped by others, would argue it back, until Mr. Ringrose would give way, in order to preserve himself from the flood of talk which now seemed always ready to overwhelm him. Then it would be the turn of the other side, who had hitherto kept silence, to argue on behalf of the customary method, and the argument was only ended when the boys themselves grew tired of it.

This is just one instance of the sort of obstruction that was kept up. It was, perhaps, amusing at first, but some ceased to be so. Moreover, Mr. Ringrose, possibly on a hint from the Head Master, now dealt out fewer lines than before, but made a careful note of those he did give, and saw that he got them in due course, and, when he received them, kept them. There was a notion abroad that they would be shown to the Head Master, and nobody dared to play pranks with them as they had done before. Incapable as he was of keeping order by his own authority, there were dreaded powers behind him. To shirk work presently became more irksome than to do enough of it to make Mr. Ringrose's task easy. The boys who were accustomed to work became heartily sick of this sterile form of obstruction which brought no pleasure with it when it came to be repeated with scarcely any variation, and would have been glad to have had Mr. Jenkins's iron hand over them again. It was only the incorrigible idlers who kept it up, and they were really as sick of it as the rest. But they were up against Mr. Ringrose now, and were encouraged by others who were not complete idlers, but were also up against him. A rather ugly spirit was beginning to make itself felt in the Form, and the obstruction sometimes found expression that was insulting to the mild little man who was so incapable, for all his scholarship, of guiding it.

But at the end of the second week something happened which eventually drew the lightning away from Mr. Ringrose's unfortunate head.

CHAPTER VIII.

JIMMY received a letter from Mr. Spedding, in the course of which was written: 'I have heard from my dear old friend, Mrs. Ringrose, who was matron of the School House when I was there. We all used to like her, but she was especially kind to me, and pulled me through an attack of what I believe would be now called appendicitis in a way I shall never forget. There was no regular sanatorium in those days, and she took me into her own room and sat up with me night and day till I got over it. I might not have been alive to write to you now if it hadn't been for dear old Mrs. Ringrose. She wasn't so very old then, but she must be pretty old now. I hear that she has come back to live at Whyborough, and that her son is taking a form in the school temporarily. I wonder if by any chance it is yours, Jimmy. If so, you've got a fine scholar to teach you. I remember Johnny Ringrose as a baby, but he has become a great man since—I suppose the best scholar the old school has ever produced. I have written to the old lady, and told her about you. If she asks you to go and see her, please do, and tell her about me in return. She will listen to everything you have to say and want more.'

Jimmy had told his mother about Mr. Ringrose, but apparently she had kept his information to herself. He was inclined to be glad that she had. Mr. Spedding would not like to hear how the son of his old friend was being treated.

The day after he received Mr. Spedding's letter came a note from Mrs. Ringrose asking him to tea. He was rather alarmed at the prospect. He had taken no big part in 'rotting' Mr. Ringrose, but his conscience was not altogether free of offence on that score, and it would be awkward to meet the victim of so much unpleasantness, which was now becoming hostility, in private life. But he could not very well refuse the invitation, so got leave from Mr. Stanhope, and went to call on Mrs. Ringrose on Sunday afternoon.

The address given him was a little cottage on the outskirts of the town. It had a big shady garden behind it, but on this February afternoon its chief point of interest was a low-ceiled spacious sitting-room, which took up most of the ground-floor, and was evidently the only one which the cottage contained. It struck Jimmy, coming from the bareness of the hall and dormitory which he inhabited at Stanhope's, as delightfully cosy and home-like. There was a bright fire burning, and a plate of muffins, and another plate of crumpets were toasting in front of it. There was also a purring cat on the hearthrug, which seems the natural thing in a room inhabited by an old lady, and greatly adds to its air of comfort. There were comfortable chairs in the room, and an old-fashioned sofa, plenty of books, some nice pictures on the walls, and carpet and curtains, and wall paper of such colours as to give it an appearance of warmth and snugness that was grateful to the senses. But the nicest thing in it was the little old lady, who was sitting in a chair by the fire, as Jimmy was shown in, with a book on her knee.

She wore a black silk gown and a lace cap, which was not too large to hide the smooth silvery hair that it adorned. Her eyes were very bright, and although she was wearing spectacles to read with when Jimmy went in, she took them off to look at him. Her cheeks were like a bright-coloured pippin, so fresh and firm in spite of her age, and she had the kindest smile to greet Jimmy with.

She had him sitting by the fire in no time, and talking about Mr. Spedding, of whom she could hardly hear enough. But when he had told her various things that he thought she would like to hear, she changed the subject, and began to talk about her son.

'He has told me about you,' said the old lady, 'and says you are a good boy, and work well.'

This was heaping coals of fire on Jimmy's head, who was not aware of having been a particularly good boy during Mr. Ringrose's mastership, though he had not given him the trouble that some others had. He wondered how much the old lady knew of what had been happening to her son of late, and what he had told her about other boys, who by no stretch of truth could have been described as good, or as working well.

'It is such a splendid thing for my son to get this work to do,' she went on brightly. 'You know, dear' (she constantly called Jimmy 'dear,' and somehow he didn't mind it from her), 'we are not very well off, my son and I. He does a great deal of very valuable work at Oxford, as I dare say you know, but much of it is not well paid. When his book comes to be published—but that will not be for some time yet—he will get a good deal of money for it, we hope; but in the meantime it is a great help to us for him to have the work to do at the school. And he likes it so much, because it is his own old school, you know, and he is very proud of it. He says there are some exceedingly clever boys in your form—I hope you are one of them, dear—and that he quite hopes some of them will do as well by-and-bye as he did himself, and he is very glad to have an opportunity of helping them in their lessons.'

'Does he like teaching?' asked Jimmy, when she came to a stop.

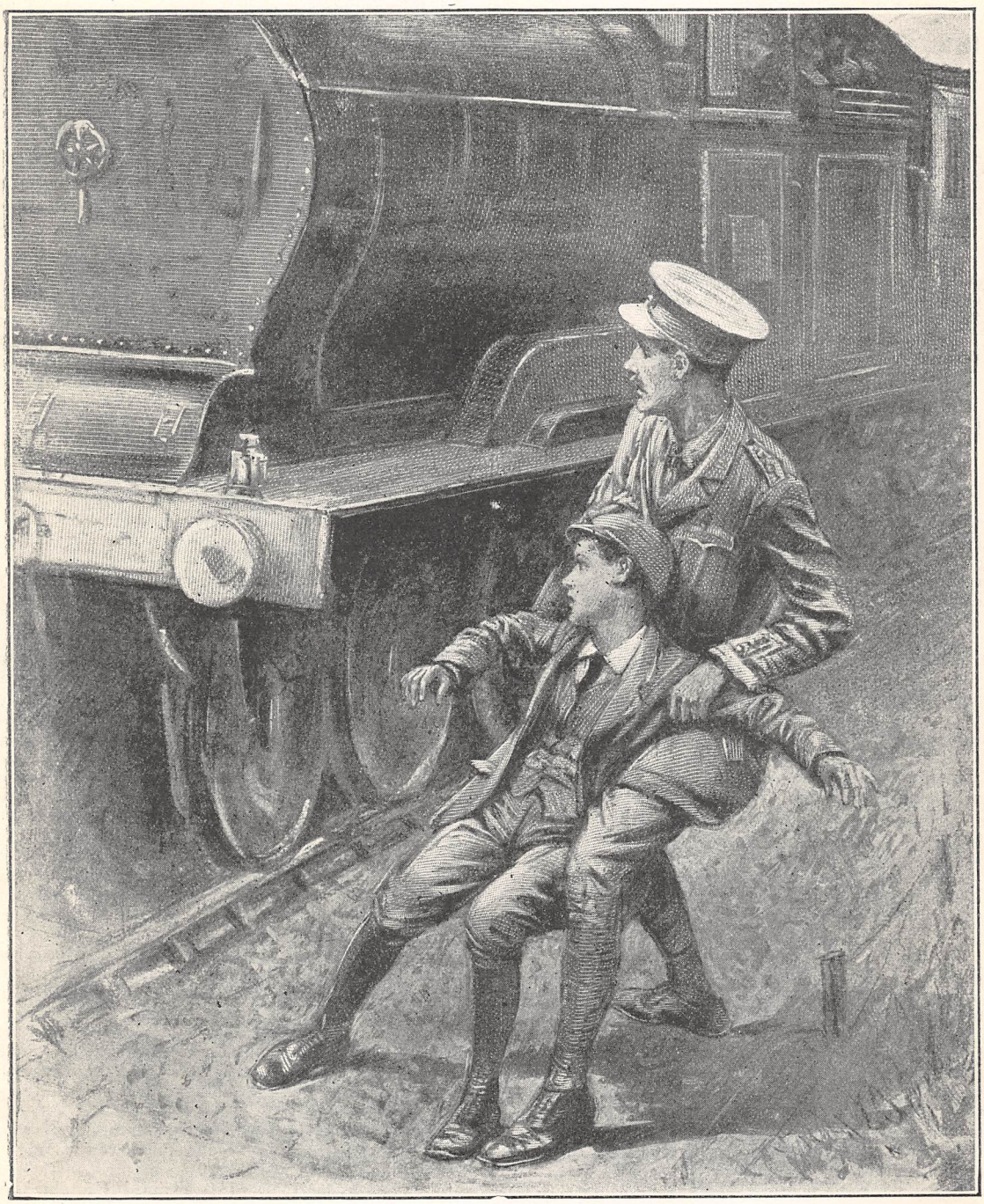
'Oh, yes, he likes it. He likes all the boys too. The only thing, he says, is that they are rather too young for him to teach them as much as he should like to. He would rather have had one of the upper forms, as he could have done more for the boys. I am rather afraid that the Head Master may be feeling something of the same sort too, for my son says that he *may* have to make other arrangements, and I suppose that means that he thinks my son may not be quite the right man in the right place. He doesn't say so, but I think that is what he is afraid of, and of course it would be a great pity, because then he would have to go back to Oxford, and I should lose him, and we should not be so well off as we are now.'

Jimmy was feeling very uncomfortable. 'Is Mr. Ringrose going to stay all the term?' he asked.

'As long as Mr. Jenkins is ill,' said the old lady. 'And I'm afraid he is very ill at present, and not likely to recover much before the end of the term, so as to take up his work again. Of course, we couldn't wish Mr. Jenkins not to be well enough to come back, but we have every right to wish that my son shall keep his place as long as he has to be away. But I wonder what has become of Johnny. He went out for a walk, but said he would be sure to come back in time for tea. It is just upon tea-time already, and I'm sure you won't want to wait for yours, dear.'

(*Continued on page* 222.)

"She had the kindest smile to greet Jimmy with."



"His arm was seized in a powerful grasp."

'BLACK IS THE RAVEN.'

'Black is the raven, blacker the rook,
But blackest the cad who steals this book.'

THE Head Master read this ancient couplet aloud from the flyleaf of a brand-new *Virgil*. The owner of the book, a tall, sandy-headed boy of thirteen, stood uneasily before him, his hands clenched behind his back, and a hot indignant crimson in his cheeks.

'"If my name you wish to see," continued Mr. Mason in yet more withering tones, '"Look upon page forty-three." Yes, Harrington, I *think* I have come across this style of poetry before. Here we are:

"If my name you wish to know,
Look upon page one, o,.o."'

There was a subdued giggle from the rest of the class. Jim Harrington shifted on to his other foot, and muttered something inaudible.

'On page one hundred,' continued the Head Master, mercilessly,

"If on my name you wish to look,
Go to the page at the end of the book."

The end—come, that's encouraging—

"Oh, you fool, you cannot find it;
Shut the book, and never mind it."'

The Head Master did shut the book, and handed it back to the boy with an air of ceremonious politeness. 'I think I have mentioned before, Harrington, that if you wish to decorate your books in this—ah—very juvenile way, you must buy them yourself. You will bring me half-a-crown to-morrow to pay for a new *Virgil*. Ring the bell, Tomkins. You can go.'

There was comparative silence while the Head Master strode out of the room; then Harrington's bottled-up rage broke out. He vented it upon Mervyn Reynolds, an undersized, timid-looking boy about a year younger than himself. 'You silly young ass, I'll teach you to scribble in my books, and get me into a row, and then sit tight and say nothing!'

'I didn't scribble in your book!' declared Reynolds, ducking his head, and raising an arm to defend himself.

'You did, you liar! It wasn't done when I lent it you last night, and nobody's touched it this morning. I'll fairly sting you up!'

'Here, shut up, Harrington!' cried the head boy. 'Let him alone, or I'll give you one for yourself.'

'I'm only tanning him for getting me fined half-a-crown,' said Harrington, sulkily.

'Well, if he brings you the money to-morrow, it'll be all right. Let go his arm.'

'Mind you do bring it, that's all,' growled Harrington, only half pacified.

Mervyn escaped from the room, but he had only exchanged one trouble for another. His pocket-money had run to an end, and he had not half-a-crown in the world. He was one of the many day-boys at Hicksbeach House, so he might have asked for the money at home, but as ill-luck had it his parents were away for the night, and the idea of borrowing from the servants never occurred to him. The poor boy passed a wretched afternoon, too reserved to confide his difficulty to anybody else, and too nervous to attempt an explanation with Jim Harrington.

Half-past five came at last, and the day-boys started for home. Harrington and Reynolds both belonged to a party of about half-a-dozen, who lived in the same direction, and usually walked together. To-day, however, Mervyn hurried on in advance, accompanied by Tom Jacobs, a small, fat boy, with whom he was rather friendly. Mervyn's mind was too full of his troubles to pay much heed to his companion's conversation, until a more personal remark than usual seemed to call for an answer.

'Why are you such a funk, Reynolds?' Jacobs was genially inquiring.

'I'm not,' Mervyn answered, mechanically.

'Yes, you are. You funked Harrington this morning. You funk everything. You wouldn't dare run across the line if the train was coming round the bend.'

'Rot! I would.'

Mervyn's mind was still fixed on his debt, and he spoke without much heat.

'I'll give you half-a-crown if you do,' said Tom.

Mervyn's attention was suddenly caught. 'Take you on!' he exclaimed eagerly. 'Only will you really pay?'

Jacobs looked a little taken aback. 'Right-ho,' he answered. 'You won't do it! But the train's got to be well round the bend, you know.'

They had nearly reached the level crossing as he spoke; a puff of white smoke beyond the curve and the distant shriek of a whistle warned them that the train was coming. Mervyn walked to the edge of the line, and stood hesitating nervously. On the further side a tall man in khaki was also approaching the crossing.

'You—you promise you'll—pay the half-crown, Jacobs?'

'She's not well round the bend yet,' replied that worthy.

'Look out—the train's coming!' called one of the boys behind.

'It's right round now—have I got time——?'

Mervyn ran a few steps forward, then hesitated again.

'Look out, you little fool!'

The stentorian voice from across the line startled him afresh, and completely losing his head he began to run wildly, with his back to the approaching train, along the sleepers between the rails. The hot hissing of the engine was close at his neck—the crash and clatter in his ears was deafening him—when his arm was seized in a powerful grasp, and he found himself flung upon the grass by the side of the line.

The train rattled by, and Captain Harrington shook Mervyn to his feet. 'What on earth were you doing, you young idiot?' he demanded rather breathlessly, for he had been wounded three months before in France and was out of training.

Mervyn tried to answer, but the shock had been too much for him and he broke down in tears. The other boys came running up, Jim Harrington for one looking pale and scared.

'He did it because I dared him to,' volunteered Jacobs. 'I said I'd give him half-a-crown if he would.'

'You did?' said Captain Harrington. 'Well, you ought to have a good spanking. The silly kid was nearly killed.'

'But I did do it!' gasped Mervyn, strangling his sobs. 'Give me the half-crown—you promised you would!'

'Rot—he dragged you over.'

'Half-crown be blowed!' exclaimed Captain Harrington. 'Whatever made you risk your life for half-a-crown?'

'I owe it to Harrington,' sobbed Mervyn, 'and I've got to bring it to-morrow.'

'What, Jim?' Captain Harrington stared at his younger brother, who looked distinctly uncomfortable. 'What a beastly money-grubber you must be!'

'I don't mind about the half-crown. But he scribbled a lot of rot in my new *Virgil*, and I have got to buy another; and now he denies it.'

'Was it a select poem beginning "Black is the raven, black is the rook"?' inquired Captain Harrington.

'How did you know?'

'Because I wrote it in your book myself. I did it last night to show Billy and Phyllis what we used to put in our books at school. So you see you've been bullying this wretched chap for nothing.'

Captain Harrington was of course tremendously popular at the school, and accordingly the other boys all cast withering glances at Jim, who turned as red as a beetroot, and muttered that 'it was all very well, but he had got into a frightful row, anyway.'

'I am going up to the school, and I'll explain to Mr. Mason that it was not your fault,' said his brother a trifle contemptuously. 'And I'll pay the half-crown instead of this fellow—who obviously hasn't got one.'

Jacobs grinned very sheepishly and gazed at the distant hills. D. M. Percy Smith.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 211.)

IT needed only one glance to convince Dick that Sandy was right. There was no time to examine carefully the lines and curves and figures which covered the surface of the stone. But there, at the bottom, in bold, roughly-printed letters was the name, 'T. Jesmond,' the signature of their unknown ancestor.

Levi gave the boys no opportunity to consult together. He turned to them with a peremptory gesture, and pointed to the stone, then thrust into Dick's hands a slate and a piece of chalk.

'Write!' he said in Arabic. 'Write down quickly the interpretation of these words that I may understand.'

The old Jew's cunning face wore a smile of triumph. Indeed, he had waited for this moment for months past, ever since he had stumbled by accident into the prison-pit on one of his peddling-expeditions between Mogador and Rabat. These pits—although, of course, the boys did not know it—were often used for the concealment of treasure; Levi had been quite clever enough to realise that these strange signs and words, in the language which he knew to be English, might well be the clue to something of importance.

He had thoroughly and unavailingly searched the pit, and then buried the stone deep in the sand that it might not be re-discovered. Inquiries he would not make, for fear of arousing suspicion, and Abbas, with his smattering of French, was not able to help in deciphering the bearings, signs, and scattered directions cut so laboriously by the English sea-captain.

Levi soon saw that his only chance of turning his discovery to profit was to find an English-speaking individual who would help him without demanding a share of the possible reward. Then, by strange chance, Dick and Sandy had fallen into his hands, and the way seemed clear. As soon as they knew enough Arabic for the purpose, they should translate the writing; then the Jew would be satisfied as to the value or worthlessness of his trove.

But the boys realised the old man's intention and the trap into which they had fallen. One glance passed between them, and then Dick set his lips firmly and stood motionless, paying no heed to Levi's orders.

After a few moments the Jew evidently came to the conclusion that he had not been able to make himself understood, for he summoned Abbas to descend into the pit, and spoke to him rapidly and vehemently.

The Jew boy entered into a painstaking explanation of the case. 'My father, he travels from Rabat to Mogador six times in the year. One night, by chance, he fell into this pit, and by the Providence of the Most High, discovered this stone. He has a desire to know what the writing signifies.'

This, and much more, from Abbas in his usual hideous mixture of Arabic and French, concluding: 'And now will you write down upon the slate in Arabic the meaning of these strange signs, for already it grows late.'

'No, I won't,' Dick said point-blank. There seemed nothing for it but downright refusal. To reveal the hiding-place of the treasure to Levi was out of the question, and the idea of giving the Jews a false interpretation simply did not occur to honest Dick.

For a moment Abbas was completely taken aback then he turned to Sandy with an ingratiating and oily smile: 'You will tell us,' he said.

But the younger boy refused no less staunchly than his brother, and Abbas proceeded to explain matters to his father with much shrillness and gesticulation. As a result of this conversation, the Jew boy turned to Dick with a bullying air, 'Come, this is foolishness!' he said. 'Translate for us quickly, and let us go. Why should you be so stubborn?'

The boys being able to give no reasons for their silence, attempted no explanation, and this refusal to speak exasperated the Jews beyond measure.

Levi, in particular, soon lost his temper completely: he came close up to Dick, jabbering incessantly, and shaking his trembling hands in the boy's face. Abbas, too, talked at the top of his grating voice, alternately cajoling and threatening.

Sandy began to look a little frightened, and indeed it was no wonder, but Dick stared straight in front of him, paying no heed whatever to the angry Jews.

After some ten minutes of argument, Levi seemed to resolve upon more drastic measures. Motioning to Abbas to hold one of Dick's arms, he himself seized the other and began to twist it, slowly and deliberately.

The boy's face whitened. and he set his teeth together as the agony increased. But still he stared straight in front of him, and only shook his head resolutely in answer to the Jew's repeated demands.

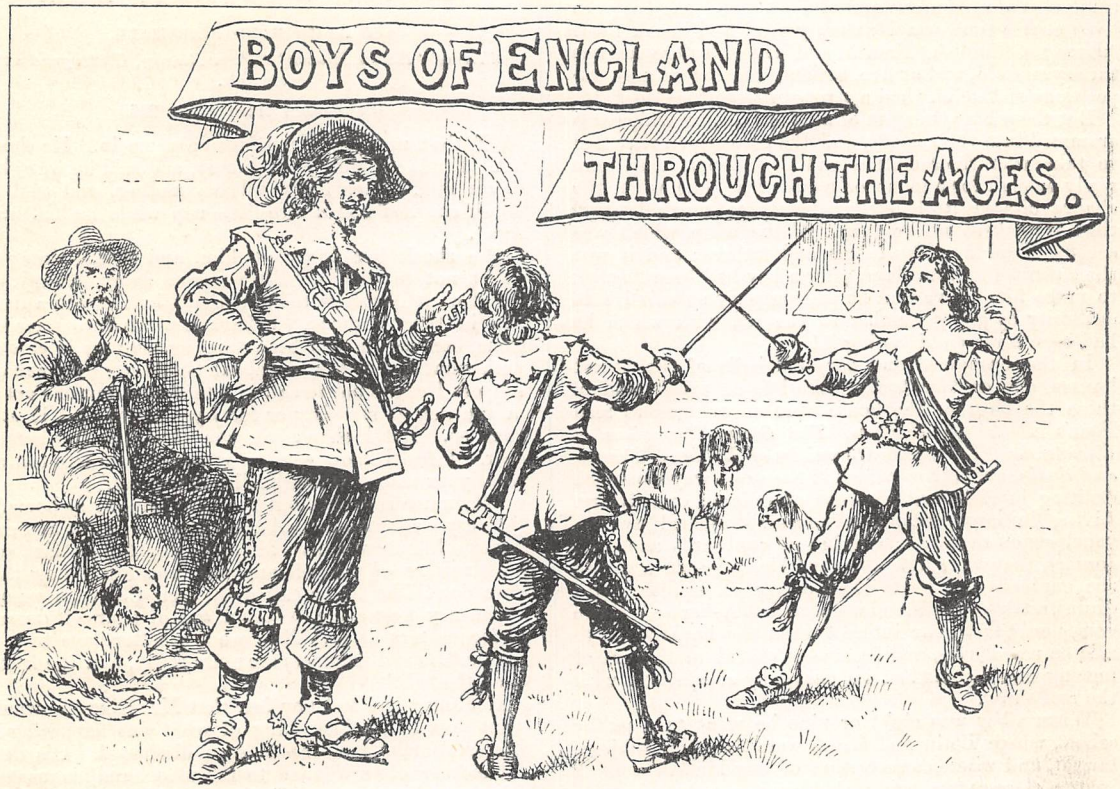
At last, when Dick felt that another wrench would make him faint with pain, Levi suddenly desisted, flinging the boy aside with such violence that he fell at full length on the sand. Yet, sick and dizzy with agony as he was, Dick's chief thought was the dread that the brutes might treat Sandy in the same way. The younger boy was not so strong as hin self . . . things hurt him worse . . . But Dick's fear was not to be realised, at any rate at the moment. Evidently Levi had some other plan in his mind, for he snarled out some unintelligible orders to Abbas, and began to ascend the rope ladder, grunting and grumbling.

His son followed him, a id then pulled up the rope,

"'Write down quickly the interpretation of these words.'"

whilst Dick lay still, dazed and bewildered, in the sand at the bottom of the pit, and Sandy crouched beside his brother, nearer to crying than the elder boy had ever been. They heard Abbas hustling together the camel and donkeys, heard the jingling of the animals' accoutrements, and the old Jew's strident, peevish voice as the little caravan moved away. But it was not until the last sound of their departure died in the distance that the boys fully realised what that departure meant.

(*Continued on page* 230.)



V. Young Cavaliers.

IN the days of the Stuarts, Cavaliers in lace-edged doublets, feathered hats, and wide cloaks, walked in Whitehall or St. James's Park, discussing the latest fashions brought from France, repeating stories of the King and his Court, and bowing to the ladies in dresses of silk and lace who drove past in four-horsed coaches. Extravagance was seen everywhere, and gallantry was the ideal of the day.

Accordingly gracefulness and good manners were the first things taught to boys. A young Cavalier above all things must not be shy, and if a child showed signs of that, he was whipped as soon as he was three years old. Later he had to learn deportment: how to carry his head and hands gracefully when walking, and how to stand elegantly in a drawing-room. He was shown how to enter a room: not marching in, boldly and unconcernedly, but entering slowly, with gallant bows to the ladies on either side; and after that he learnt how to talk in the manner of the day, leaning forward with one hand resting on the hilt of his sword, to pay a compliment or whisper a piece of gossip.

Boys were dressed exactly like their fathers, going into breeches and wearing a sword hanging from a coloured sash at the age of six. They wore the usual satin doublet, stockings that were fastened below the knee with a silk garter and a rosette, flowing grey cloak, and broad-brimmed hat crowned with high feathers.

A Cavalier's household included a chaplain, who read the prayers in the morning, and also acted as tutor to the boys. He had to teach them dancing, and something also of fencing, to make them light of foot and to get rid of any clumsiness in walking. He had to make a list of 'Rules of Conduct' and see that they were learnt by heart, and induce the boys also to have a proper sense of humility and a respect for people older than themselves, so that when they wrote to their parents they would begin the letters with 'Honoured Father,—Sir,' or 'Honoured Mother.'

Apart from this, boys started their ordinary education very early, and at the age of nine were expected to be able to speak both French and Latin, and, besides writing and reading English, to know the chief dates of history, the use of the globes which in those days were

used in place of maps for learning geography, and something also of arithmetic and of anatomy. One boy who lived at this time could actually read and speak three languages, English, French, and Latin, before he was three years old, and at five, besides knowing several propositions of Euclid, 'had a strong passion for Greek'!

But these boys, in spite of all the learning which was crammed into their heads, and the care which they had to take over their clothes and their deportment, were ready enough for a game or a practical joke when the chance offered itself. They learnt so much because they were kept under threat of the whip, which was severely used both by tutors and fathers; and it was the custom in those days, after a boy had been flogged, to make him prove that he was properly submissive to authority by going humbly to the rod with which he had been beaten and kissing it!

In the cushioned and carpeted halls of the Stuart houses, one or two books were left on tables, and of these the boys of the house were encouraged to read Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, Froissart's *Chronicles of England, France, and Spain*, and others which in the same way combined exciting incident with lessons of religion or chivalry. Living in large, rambling houses, darkened by oak panelling on the walls, and full of cupboards and dark corners, they were able to play hide-and-seek, while in the gardens and fields they played at soldiers with drums, rattles, swords, and wooden 'hobby-horses.' These games only lost their interest when the boys learnt to ride on real horses, and became so skilful in the art of fencing that a game lost its charm by comparison with the real thing.

When a boy was eight or nine he went to a public school, where Latin and Greek were the chief subjects taught, and where conversation of any kind in English in the class-rooms was forbidden, the rule being enforced by a system of fines. Plays were occasionally acted by the boys at school, and games were played round the school building, the most popular being rounders, ninepins, tennis, and a game called 'stool-ball,' which bore some resemblance to cricket.

Fireworks were invented at this time, and the manufacture of them was a favourite amusement. Once a boy procured some gunpowder, placed a handful of it in his hat, and then carefully set light to one corner. Probably because the powder was damp nothing happened, and the boy bent lower over the hat to blow the smouldering flame towards a larger heap of the powder. He succeeded only too well: the powder exploded at once, and although he hardly produced proper fireworks, he made a flame that destroyed the hat and burnt him so badly in the face that he spent the following month in bed.

Discipline at school was severe as a rule, but sometimes it failed altogether. It is said that when at Westminster School a boy wrote his name with a burnt stick on a newly whitewashed ceiling, he not only was not punished, but was told that the writing would be left as it stood until he had made the name famous throughout the country!

Boys stayed at school as a rule until they were sixteen. Then they were sent with a tutor to France, to learn more of dancing, fencing, and playing on the violin, and copy the manners of the courtiers of Paris, which were considered even more gallant and graceful than those of the English Cavaliers.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate, etc., etc.

(Continued from page 215.)

At that moment Mr. Ringrose came in. He shook hands solemnly with Jimmy, and said he was glad to see him. Then he kissed his mother, and said he hoped she had had a nice little nap while he had been away.

She shook her finger at him, and said, 'Now you ought not to give my little secrets away, Johnny. I didn't want Henshaw to know that I indulged in a little nap in the afternoon. I haven't wanted to since he came, because he has been keeping me very interested with what he has told me about Spedding. Dear me, I suppose I ought not to call him that now, but one got so in the way of it thirty or forty years ago that it still goes on. But I shan't call you Henshaw any longer, dear. I feel I know you too well. If you will tell me what your name is, I will call you by that.'

'My name is James, but I'm called Jimmy at home.'

'Very well, then, I shall call you Jimmy, just as I call my son Johnny when we are alone together. But you must neither of you tell anybody, because I know that boys don't like to be called by their Christian names when they first come to school, and of course it doesn't do for masters either. Now we had better have tea, for the muffins and crumpets are quite ready, and the kettle is on the boil.'

If Jimmy had had any fear that Mr. Ringrose would want to allude to anything of what was happening in Lower Fourth, the fear was soon dissipated. His dear old mother often alluded to the school and his mastership there, but it was plain that he had kept everything hidden from her that could in any way distress her, and had led her to believe that his position was an entirely happy and comfortable one, and had even stretched the truth in telling her about certain of the boys, which under the circumstances might very well be forgiven him. Jimmy learnt to his surprise that Weaver was considered in Jasmine Cottage a high-spirited, amusing boy, that Pilling was clever, but not too fond of work, that many of the others showed considerable promise, and would be a great credit to the school by-and-by; and finally it came out, almost by chance, that if Mr. Ringrose proved a success during his temporary mastership of Lower Fourth, he would have a good chance of being appointed Sixth Form Master at the new school year, when that post would become vacant by the retirement of the present master.

'That would be a great thing for us,' said the old lady, 'and would mean our being able to live together at least as long as I am alive, which I should dearly love.'

Even Jimmy realised how little this was now likely to happen, for poor little Mr. Ringrose had proved himself very far from a success in his mastership. As Sixth Form Master he would not have such trouble with discipline, but even his fine scholarship would not make up for his total inability to make himself respected by the boys whom he taught.

And yet he was greatly to be respected in other ways, as Jimmy also found out. He was certainly a gentleman. He must have been feeling very unhappy at this

time. His daily work must have been a matter of acute dread to him, and he must have suffered in his self-respect by the way he was being treated. He had also probably felt the Head Master's displeasure at what had recently happened in his Form at least as much as the boys who had been punished for it; and it had almost certainly been intimated to him then that not only was the coveted Sixth Form Mastership out of his reach, but that if affairs didn't mend he would not be able to continue in his present position even as long as Mr. Jenkins remained away. If he had to leave, and another temporary master had to be brought in, it would be something like disgrace for him. But something of the sort must have been hanging over his head, for he had thought it necessary to prepare his mother for it, as she had let out to Jimmy.

After tea, as the old lady was helping her little maid to clear away, Mr. Ringrose showed Jimmy the collection of butterflies he had made. Butterfly and moth-hunting was about the only open-air pursuit that the poor little man went in for, and he told Jimmy that his bad sight was a serious handicap to him even there. But he had a fine collection, and some of his specimens came from the New Forest, which gave Jimmy something to talk about. He found that he quite liked Mr. Ringrose in private life, and as for his old mother, he loved her, and when Mr. Ringrose left them for a quarter of an hour before it was time for him to go, he told her about his own mother, and about his little sister.

Mr. Ringrose and Jimmy walked back to evening chapel together. As they went into the school yard the jeers with which the master was apt to be greeted wherever he went began, and Jimmy shared in the discomfort they brought. But he walked with him as far as the Cloisters, and was not ashamed to be seen in his company, though it brought him plenty of ill-natured notice.

CHAPTER IX.

JIMMY told Pilling and Scott about his visit to Mrs. Ringrose. These two were his chief friends at this time, and he was made welcome to their room whenever leisure and the rules of the house permitted him to visit it.

'That's why you came swanking into Cloisters with him then,' said Pilling. 'I thought you were training to be his good little boy. I only wish we could get him turfed out. He's a dirty little scug, and got us into all that row with the Head. What is he like at home? Did he give you any lines to bring away with you?'

'He never said anything about the Form,' said Jimmy, 'except to make old Mrs. Ringrose think everything was all right there. I thought it was very sporting of him. He had told her you were a clever lad, and he quite liked you.'

'What, me!' exclaimed Pilling, in the utmost surprise. 'Why I've downed him more than anybody, except the Weavle. What did he say about the Weavle?'

'I only know what he'd said to her about anybody by the way she talked. She said Weaver must have a lot of fun in him and she should like to ask him to tea.'

'Well, that beats everything!' exclaimed Pilling. 'I must say it's rather sporting of the little man all the same. What does it all mean?'

'What did he say about me?' inquired Scott.

'I don't remember your name being mentioned. But he hasn't said anything to her against anybody. I say, you chaps, I want to tell you. He came here on trial, and if he does all right he's to take Sixth Form when Moggeridge retires. He and his mother are very hard up, and she's pretty old and they want to live here together as long as she's alive. I wish he could get Sixth Form.'

'I don't know that I do,' said Scott. 'I don't want to find him there when I get up. I'm tired of him. I'd rather have old Tuns.'

But Pilling, more generous, or else understanding quicker the facts of the case, said: 'It's rather hard luck on the poor little beggar to rag him as we do if it's like that. Fancy him taking the Sixth, though! A nice time Williams would give him, and fellows like that, wouldn't they?'

'The Head would see that he wasn't too much ragged in the Sixth,' said Scott. 'And there are people going in for scholarships who would want to get all the work out of him that they could.'

'After all, he's an O. W.,' said Pilling. 'And if he is a little scug, he has done something for the school. Stanhope said he was the best scholar we had ever sent to Oxford, and got the school four "halves." Nobody else has ever got more than three.'

Half-holidays are given for University scholarships gained from the school, and for other special distinctions at Oxford and Cambridge. Mr. Stanhope had addressed the Lower Fourth boys of his house on the subject of the late disturbance, and had imparted this information about the benefits conferred on the school by Mr. Ringrose's exploits. But it had been at a time when feeling had run high against him on account of the holiday of which he had been instrumental in depriving his Form, and the benefits enjoyed by a past generation had not been considered to balance the account.

'If he's as clever as all that, why cannot he make enough money without coming here as an usher?' inquired Scott, who came of commercial stock, and judged success by tangible reward.

The answer to the question was not within Jimmy's or Pilling's power to give, but the real reason was that John Ringrose was a student by nature and inclination, and the money rewards for students are small and long in coming.

'He's writing a book,' said Jimmy. 'When he gets it printed he'll have some money. What I think is that we ought to leave off ragging him, so that the Head will give him a show. From what he said to old Mrs. Ringrose, and she told me, I believe he'll be turfed out of it pretty soon if he doesn't keep better order.'

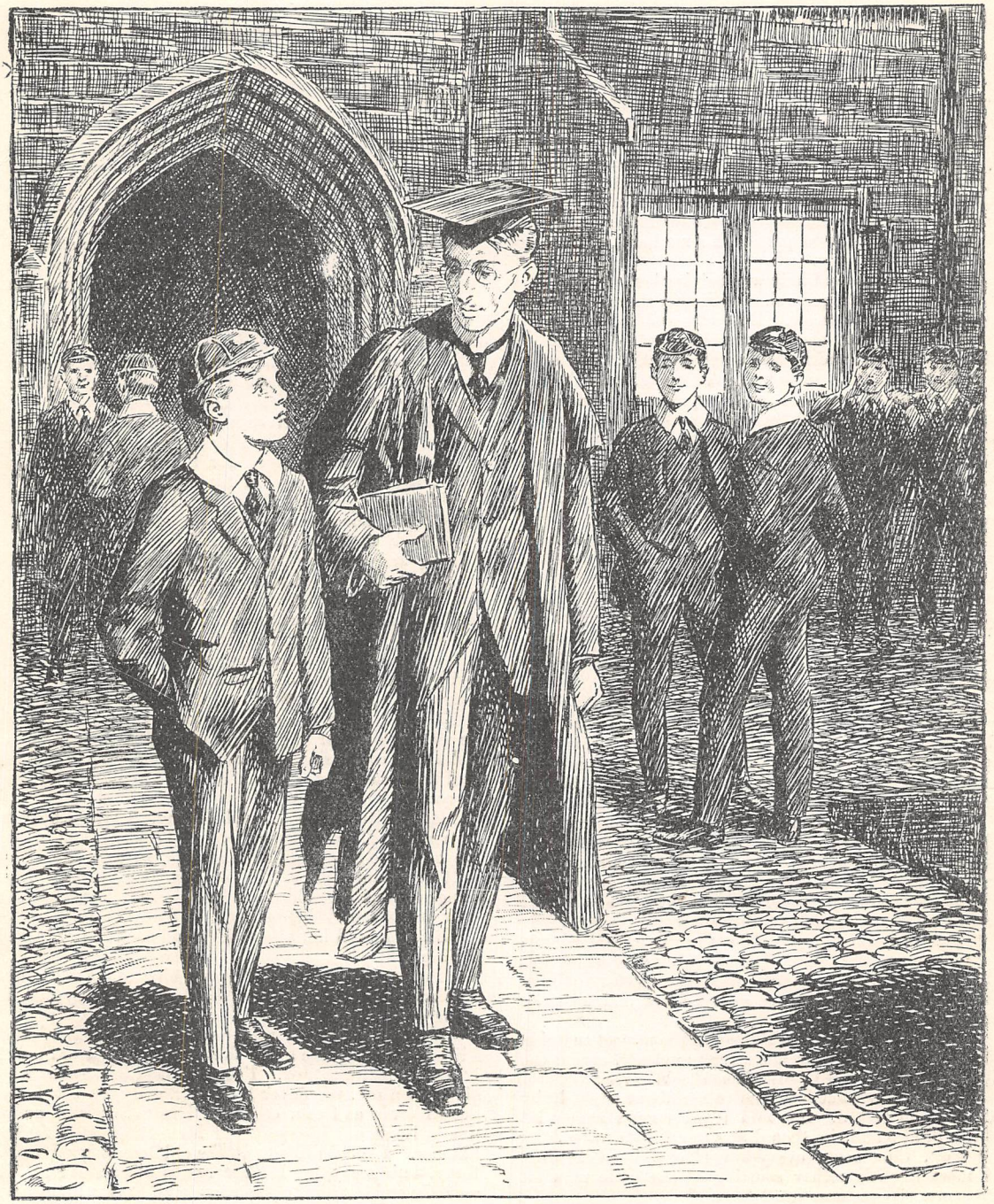
'Didn't he tell her about the Head coming in?' asked Pilling.

'Oh, no; he doesn't tell her anything to make her uncomfortable. She thinks we like him, and everything is going on all right.'

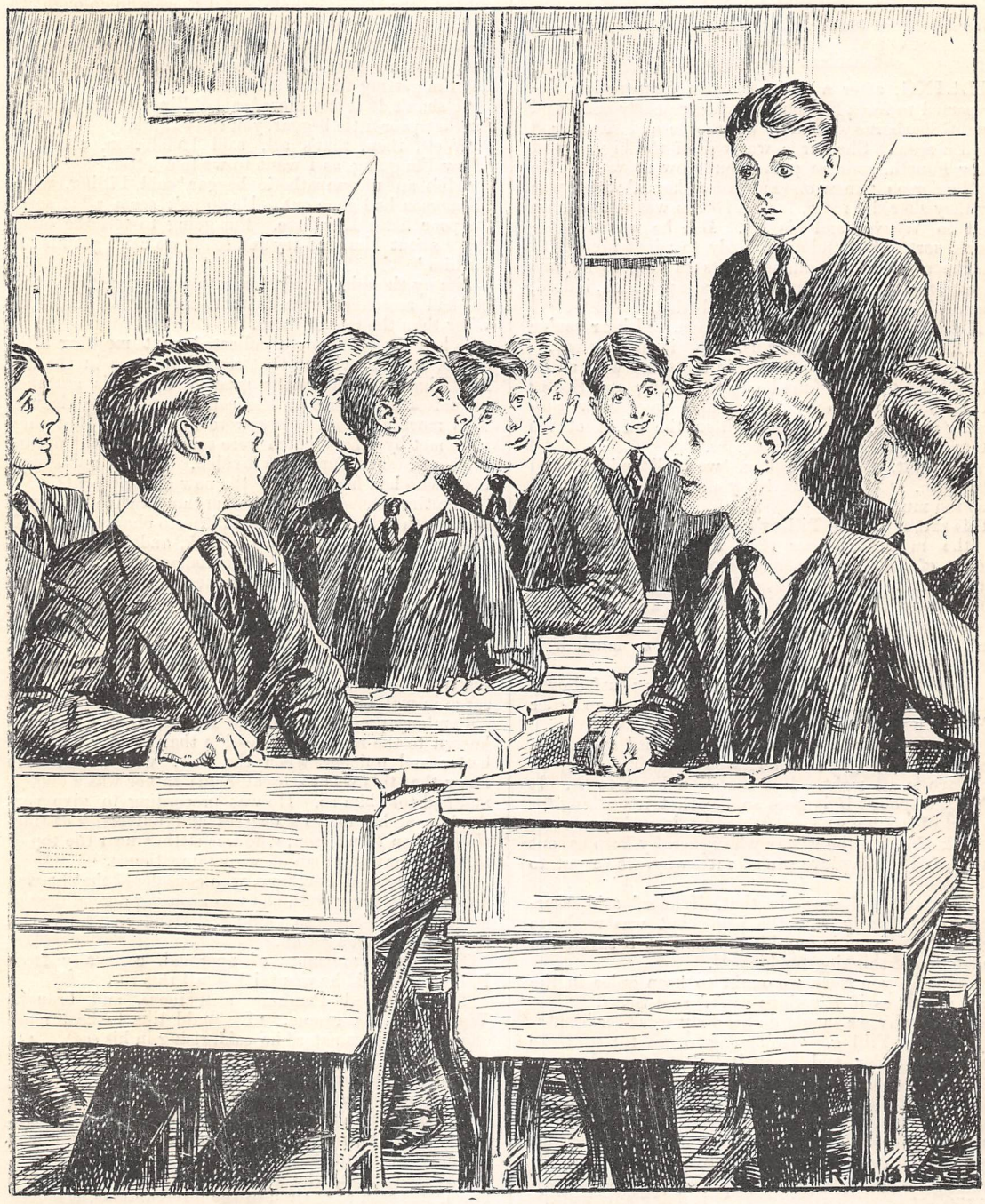
'Well, I do call it rather sporting, altogether,' said Pilling, after a pause of consideration. 'Poor old lady! I like old ladies myself. I've got an old great-aunt who gives me a sov. whenever I see her, and you bet I see her as often as I can, only she lives in Scotland, and I live in London. I expect old Mrs. Ringrose is rather like her. I should like to do the old lady a good turn. I say, let's see what Hender has to say about it, shall we? Go and ask him to step round and have a little talk, Henshaw.'

'I'm not your fag; go yourself,' said Jimmy, 'or send Scott.'

(*Continued on page* 226.)



"Mr. Ringrose and Jimmy walked back to evening chapel together."



"Henderson said, 'Oh, chuck it, and let's get on.'"

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 223.)

PILLING, after a little friendly vituperation, departed to fetch Henderson, who presently came and brought Sherborne with him. Sherborne and Henderson shared a room. Sherborne was one of the big boys of Lower Fourth, good at games but slow at work. He and Henderson 'knew one another at home,' which was why they shared a room, for Sherborne was really more allied to Weaver and his set. But he was a good-natured sort of boy and quite ready to adapt himself to Henderson's more strenuous habits as long as he was not expected to turn himself into a sap, which, indeed, he could hardly have done if he had tried.

'Hullo, Henshaw!' said Henderson. 'I hear you've got a little piece of news for us. Spit it out, my boy.'

Jimmy spat it out, something in the same way as he had told what he had found out to Pilling and Scott; and Pilling, whose easy sympathies were now thoroughly aroused, sought to heighten the effect of his statement by frequent interjections.

'All right, Pills, old boy, we're listening,' said Henderson. 'You mustn't let your feelings carry you away too much.'

This rather dashed Pilling's enthusiasm, which was for the moment keener than Jimmy's, perhaps on account of his golden memories of his great-aunt, in whom he had fancied a resemblance to Mrs. Ringrose. And Jimmy fell rather chilled, too, and wondered whether he was telling his story well enough. 'I did think it was rather beastly to rag him so much if it meant his being turfed out,' he ended.

'We didn't know it would mean his being turfed out,' said Sherborne. 'Besides, if an usher can't keep order we've got a right to rag him.'

'Well, I'll tell you what I think about it,' said Henderson. 'Ragging an usher who is such a mug as Ringdove is all right. But there's a limit to it. It isn't good enough if it goes so far that it's asking for the sort of trouble we've just been having. If you come to think of it, it's the ushers who generally keep us out of that, and if Ringdove can't do it—why, we've got to do it ourselves.'

'There's a lot of sense in that, Hender,' said Sherborne, who hardly saw the point, but was ready to back up Henderson in anything he said, as it saved him the trouble of thinking for himself.

'I suppose you mean we ought to keep order in the Form ourselves if Ringdove can't,' said Scott. 'But I don't see why we should do his dirty work for him.'

'I do,' said Pilling. 'He's going to get turfed if he doesn't keep order, and I say it isn't fair on the poor little beggar, with his poor old mater and all.'

'We've got to keep some sort of order,' said Henderson. 'I've made up my mind about that already. For one thing, we shall have the Head down on us again if we don't. None of us have played footer for more than a week, and we don't want that to happen again. For another thing, hardly anybody is doing any work.'

'Now that I call a distinct advantage, Hender,' said Sherborne, with a comical air of weighing a question seriously.

'Well, I don't,' said Henderson. 'If you don't want to get your remove, I do, and a good many others too. The people who don't want to work needn't. I'm not going to try to make them. But those who do ought to be allowed to, and they can't with all the ragging that goes on—and the time that's wasted. That's one for you, Pills, my boy! You're very smart at wasting time, but I'm getting tired of it myself.'

'I shan't do it any more,' said Pilling. 'I'm so sorry for that poor little beggar, you can't think.'

'Well, then, that's all,' said Henderson, abruptly. 'Now I'm going, as I want to write a letter.'

'He's an unsympathetic beggar,' said Pilling, when Henderson had gone out. He doesn't seem a bit sorry for poor little Ringdove. I'm going to tell the other chaps about him, and try and see if we can't get his job for him.'

Jimmy thought Henderson rather unsympathetic too, but had reason afterwards to think that he had been wiser than the rest of them.

When Lower Fourth collected next morning after chapel it was evident that something was in the air. Mr. Ringrose was usually greeted upon his entrance by noises of a more or less contemptuous significance. This morning these noises were not absent, but they were met by others which were something in the nature of cheers. The Form was divided. It was not everybody who had heard yet of the new developments.

The time came for the first argumentative interruption, with which Pilling had hitherto charged himself. But Pilling sat quiet at his desk, and his place was taken by another boy called Pembury.

Pembury suggested, with an excellent show of reason, that as the morning was particularly cold, it would be a good thing if the boy who had to say his Repetition might do it standing by the fire.

Mr. Ringrose objected to the suggestion, on account of the time it would take, and the disturbance it would cause in walking to and fro.

Pembury pressed the point. He said that it was well known to the medical profession that the brain worked better and quicker when the body was warm. He knew that this was so, because his father was a doctor, and had told him so. He was proceeding to give particulars of his father's degrees and university distinctions, when Henderson, who was sitting near the top of the form, gave a groan of weary impatience.

This surprised Pembury, who considered that he was doing particularly well, and was arousing a good deal of laughter. He came to a stop, and Henderson said, 'Oh, chuck it, and let's get on.'

There were murmurs of approval, especially from Pilling, who said he was 'sick of all this rot.

This surprised Pembury still more, and brought Weaver to his rescue. 'I should like to hear more about Pembury's pater,' he said, rising in his seat. 'Is he an O. W., Pember?'

'Go on, top boy,' said Mr. Ringrose, mildly.

The top boy jumped up and repeated his two lines, which were now the recognised number for Repetition, and the next boy followed him sharply. Those who had wanted to interrupt were too surprised to object, and as Henderson, who had considerable influence in the Form, was seen to be tired of the interruptions, as indeed most of them now were, the Repetition went on, and was finished in record time.

The work done by the Form that morning would not have satisfied Mr. Jenkins, but it was a good deal more

than had ever been done under Mr. Ringrose. Those who did not feel inclined to work shirked as before, but, feeling the change in the atmosphere, they refrained from annoyance of those who did, and these gave themselves with relief to the tasks which they had lately had to perform under almost insuperable obstacles.

Henderson was more responsible for the change than anybody, but it was no part of his intention, apparently, to do more than obtain a certain amount of quiet for those who wanted to work. If there came too much noise, he said, 'Oh, do shut up,' to whoever was making it, or expressed his impatience in other ways. But he took no notice of other breaches of discipline, which still went on.

If Pilling and Jimmy, and the rest of those who now had Mr. Ringrose's affairs so much at heart, had left it at that, the direct result would have been that the Form could have settled down to the same sort of compromise that obtained in other Forms whose masters were not good at keeping discipline. The workers would have done their work free from too much interruption, and the idlers would have idled in the usual way. And the indirect result would have been to remove from Mr. Ringrose the shadow of dismissal.

But Pilling could not see that, although Jimmy, who was inclined to believe in everything that Henderson did, was beginning to have an inkling of it. A buzz of conversation, not too disturbing, was going on all over the Form, and presently everybody was more or less aware of Mr. Ringrose's private affairs, as they had been disclosed to Jimmy. Everybody, however, did not get the story quite right, as it was passed from mouth to mouth; and, needless to say, everybody did not view it in exactly the same light. Jimmy had reason, later on, to wish that he had kept it to himself, or had told it in confidence to only a few.

(*Continued on page* 239.)

THE MOLE.

WHO is the worker that lives underground,
Down out of sight where he cannot be found?
Working away
Day after day
Making his nest with its tunnels all round.

Mole is his name, and his nature is such
That nothing above ground delights him so much
As an underground home
Where no enemies come,
And he finds out his way by his keen sense of touch.

For there in the dark he has no use for eyes;
So, being a sensible fellow and wise,
Wherever he goes
He uses his nose
Which serves him as feeler, and smells out supplies.

For three busy hours he will work with a will,
For another three hours he will rest and keep still.
Then he gets up again
Every effort to strain,
And works out his burrows with wonderful skill.

He often gets thirsty—so what do you think?
A number of neat little wells he will sink
With wonderful care,
One here and one there,
So then he is certain of plenty to drink.

A curious life it must certainly be
With nothing but earthworms for dinner and tea!
And yet Mr. Mole,
Down there in his hole,
Is just as contented as creatures that see.

EVA M HAINES.

THE AUSTRALIAN SINGING-BIRD.

A WILD shriek rent the air, to be followed by another, and yet another: 'Oh! Auntie—Auntie! Help! help!' The childish voice was piteous in its entreaty.

Mrs. Belford, the Rector's wife, hastily flung her work aside and rushed from her sitting-room into the garden. '*Greta*,' she cried (Greta was her young orphan niece from Australia, who had lately come to make her home under the Rectory roof), 'whatever *is* the matter? Stop crying, my dear, and tell me at once.'

For answer Greta simply flung herself into her aunt's arms. 'Oh, Auntie!' she sobbed breathlessly. 'It was c-cruel of them when they knew I just l-loathed snakes!'

'Snakes, darling?' said Mrs. Belford, looking bewildered, as well she might. 'We haven't any snakes here.'

'Y-yes, you have!' cried Greta, hysterically. 'There's a pail full of them down there by the steps of the lake, and some of them are c-crawling about.'

'Darling, you must have made a mistake, surely,' said her aunt, soothingly.

Was it fancy, or did Mrs. Belford hear just at this moment sounds of half-suppressed laughter from the shrubbery close at hand?

'No, Auntie,' persisted Greta, 'I wasn't mistaken. Hal said it would help you if I washed down the steps, as Mary was busy, and—and he got the pail and everything ready for me. So—so——'

'Go on, dear.' This as Greta struggled with her sobs. Mrs. Belford's voice was stern—she suspected mischief.

'I took the flannel to wring it out and found the pail full of snakes.'

At last Mrs. Belford understood. 'Darling,' said she, 'they were not snakes. I'm afraid my boy Hal has been up to his pranks again. They were just eels—harmless, wriggling eels—which were sent to us this morning as a present from one of the fishermen. Come, come now, dry your tears, and don't think any more about it.'

But little Greta was far too shaken and upset to dry her tears very readily. However, for her auntie's sake, she did her best.

'I'll send Mary into the garden to gather the "snakes" together,' said Mrs. Belford, smiling into the tear-stained face, 'and you shall come into the sitting-room with me and help me with the week's darning. What do you say to that?'

'I should simply love it,' was the reply. Greta delighted in helping her auntie. 'I am so sorry I was such a baby,' she finished, in shamed accents.

Ten minutes later the child was busy with her needle, nearly all the traces of distress having vanished away. But twelve-year-old Hal that self-same day had a bad quarter of an hour with his father and mother, a time which made him feel both 'small' and ashamed.

"'Oh, Auntie!' she sobbed, breathlessly. 'It was cruel of them!'"

His young sisters, Dorothy and May, who were devoted to him and looked upon Greta as somewhat of an interloper, very much resented the fact of his getting into trouble on their cousin's account.

'I deserved the scolding, every bit,' said straightforward Hal. 'It was a hateful thing to do; but all the same, she's a silly little coward.' And so said they all, not only behind Greta's back, but also to her face. And that night the little Australian cried herself to sleep.

(*Concluded on page* 235.)

SEALS AT HOME.

(*Engraved on wood.*)

THE MUSCOVY MERCHANTS.

England's First Friendship with Russia.

III.—THE LOST SHIPS.

CHANCELER and his men, in the *Edward Bonaventure*, fared not very ill; but of Sir Hugh Willoughby's party, in the *Bona Esperanza* (or *Good Hope*) and the *Good Confidence*, almost all that is known is 'a note found written in one of the two ships which wintered in Lapland, where Sir Hugh Willoughby and all his company died, being frozen to death, in the year 1553.' There were seventy men in all. There had been three more when they set out from England; but of these fortunate three, two had been left sick at Harwich, and one, Thomas Nash, 'ducked at the yardarm for thieving, and so discharged.' His knavery stood him in good stead.

The 'note' tells of their adventures. In the gale, as has been said, all the ships were parted. At night there fell a thick mist, and the *Esperanza* lost her pinnace. As soon as it was day, and the fog overpast, they looked about, and at last descried one of the other ships to leeward. They spread the foresail and drew up to her. It was the *Confidence;* the *Edward* they could not see.

When the wind abated, after four days of stress, the two ships hoisted sail and went north-east by north, meaning to run to Wardhouse. They sailed fifty leagues, and sounded and found one hundred and sixty fathoms; that meant they were far from land, and the coast did not lie as their chart showed.

For eight days they sailed back and forth, north-east and south-west, and found no land; then about mid-August they saw land, and dropped a boat to discover what country it was. But the boat could not come to land, for the water was full of shoals and ice; there was no sign of human habitation.

Once more they put out to sea. The *Confidence* was letting in bilge, and grew heavy in the water; yet they saw no land in another week's wanderings. They sailed north-west, west, south-west, and on August 28th came again to a low, sandy coast. They sent a boat to shore, and found no people, but there were crosses and other signs to show that men had been there. But there was no help for them there, and they went westwards thence along the coast. A few days later they lost sight of land, and were in unknown seas, the wind being contrary; on September 8th they saw land again, but the wind was off the shore, and they must keep to sea. So for six days they cast off and on along the coast of Norway, and on September 14th at last came to anchor and landed a boat, and found a good harbour, though still no sign of human beings.

The land was rocky and high, and they could find no people. After search, they went yet two days' journey further along the coast, and found a new safe anchorage in a creek that ran two leagues inland, and was full of seals and other beasts; on land also at this place were bears and great deer, foxes, and 'divers strange beasts, which were to us unknown and also wonderful.'

They remained there a week; and the year being far spent, and frost, snow, and hail, as if it were the very depth of winter, coming upon them, they decided to winter there. They sent three men south-south-west to search if they could find people; they went three days' journey, and found none. They sent likewise parties of three west, four days' journey, and south-south-east, three days' journey, 'who in like sort returned without finding of people, or any similitude of habitation.'

The 'note' ends there. That is all that is known of Willoughby's seventy men; except that their ships were found later, empty, and their bodies, frozen to death, with this 'note' for their only history. The ships were ill-fated: they were plundered by the Lapps, and when they were found and sent back to England, one was lost at sea, with all hands, in a storm, and the other came home only by chance after a great gale.

It is said that if Willoughby and his men had known the country and its customs, they could have built suitable shelters and lived. But they had not that knowledge; they were but travellers, explorers, from whose toil (vain as it then seemed) the lives and fortunes of all Englishmen in later years drew strength.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 220.)

IT was Sandy who spoke first, in a queer, trembling voice. 'Dick, I do believe they've gone . . . for good.'

'I hope they have, I'm sure,' Dick groaned, for throbbing pain ran all through him from his wrenched arm.

'Yes, but, Dick . . . if they've really gone, we shall s-starve . . .'

'We must get out of here somehow, of course.' Dick was roused from his own troubles by the appeal in the younger boy's voice. He sat up, and after a few moments managed to rise to his feet.

Together, as well as the growing dusk would allow, they examined the pit, but soon found that escape from it was a hopeless business. The walls of loose sand crumbled away when they attempted to climb them; there was neither foothold nor handhold, nor any creepers or shrubs to help them.

For a long time Dick and Sandy shouted in the hope that some passer-by might hear and rescue them, but no help came, and at last, hoarse, almost voiceless, they sat down to consider their position, more or less hopelessly.

Sandy took it for granted that the Jews intended to leave them there to starve, but Dick, with his more logical mind, came to a different conclusion. 'They won't go away altogether,' he said. 'I'm sure that old beast of a Levi won't give up his plans so easily as that. No; they'll come back in a few days' time, when they know we'll be almost starved with hunger and thirst . . . then they think we'll tell them what they want to know.'

For a moment Sandy was silent; then he shivered and crept closer to Dick. 'I—I almost think I'd rather they left us to starve altogether,' he whispered.

'So would I! But they'll get nothing out of us all the same, the brutes!' said Dick grimly.

'I don't know—p'r'aps they will—if we're *starving*, Dick.'

'We won't tell them, Sandy—we *won't!*' repeated Dick, with almost feverish eagerness.

'No, Dick, but—the treasure won't be much use to us or Father if we're both dead,' said Sandy, shrewdly enough, and to that contention Dick could find no answer at the moment.

'I don't care,' he repeated, obstinately. 'We won't tell them!'

'And then, p'r'aps the treasure mayn't be there, after all,' Sandy pursued. 'Langridge didn't believe in it a bit, you know. And it would be a jolly rotten business to get killed or starved about something that wasn't real, wouldn't it?'

But here Dick doggedly refused to be convinced, and even Sandy's own arguments were half-hearted. The presence of the stone in exactly the place indicated by the book was very strong evidence in favour of the truth of the whole business.

They had time to discuss many plans during the hours which followed. The one which seemed most reasonable was to bargain with Levi—to agree to help him if they were allowed to keep a large portion of the treasure, sufficient, at least, to pay their father's ransom.

Gradually, while the boys were talking, the dusk fell; soon they could scarcely see each other's faces; a little later, darkness as dense as black velvet closed them in. They sat pressed closely together against the side of the pit, listening to the weird wails and cries which came from the thickets overhead.

'Owls of some sort, I expect,' Dick said. 'Doesn't it sound horrid and creepy, though?... Sandy! what's that?'

From close beside them came a low rustle... then again... the sound of some living thing moving in the pit.

'It c-can't be a wild b-beast,' Sandy whispered, trying to speak steadily. 'We should have heard it come down.'

'Then what is it?... it's alive, anyway!...' Dick spoke in a whisper.

The question was answered almost immediately. Over Sandy's hand, as it rested on the sand, something crept, something scaly and clammy... The boy snatched his fingers away with a cry, starting to his feet. 'Oh, Dick, it's a snake!' he gasped.

Almost at the same instant the elder boy drew up his foot sharply, as he felt a hard, smooth head thrust against his bare ankle. From all sides of them came the dry rustling; plainly the place swarmed with serpents, and whether they were poisonous or not, who could tell? All that horror of snakes which most people understand gripped the two boys. It would have been bad enough by daylight; in that dense darkness it was unspeakably horrible.

They had no sticks or other weapons with which to strike at the brutes, and to do so would only have infuriated them.

'Keep as still as you can, Sandy,' Dick advised; 'even when they touch you.'

But this was more easily said than done; it was almost impossible to remain motionless whilst the cold length of a snake passed over your ankle: it seemed to take such an immense time to pass, as Sandy complained. Sleep was absolutely out of the question. The boys could only wait and long for the light. Never had a night seemed so infinitely long as that; never had the boys been so glad to see the grey morning slowly breaking.

It seemed that the snakes, like the owls, were night creatures. By the time that the light grew strong enough to make things visible not one of them was to be seen. Between the interlacing branches overhead the glimpses of sky grew blue, but Dick and Sandy scarcely noticed it. Utterly wearied out by their long vigil they fell asleep, and slept until late afternoon.

Sandy was the first to wake, and rub his heavy eyes; after a few moments he spoke with a deep sigh. 'I wish we hadn't waked, Dick,' he said. 'It would have been a jolly sight better to stay asleep for hours and hours and hours.'

'Why?' the elder boy asked, drowsily.

'Because I'm so frightfully hungry and thirsty, and it doesn't matter when we're asleep... Besides, it's getting dark already, and the snakes'll be coming again.'

It was certainly a cheerless and depressing prospect. Dick, too, was conscious of gnawing hunger, and there seemed no possible means of satisfying it.

'We shall have to catch the snakes and eat them,' Sandy suggested, gloomily.

They had vague hopes that Levi and Abbas might return before the second night fell, and they had quite resolved to attempt to make a bargain with them. But there was no sign of the Jews as the afternoon wore on to sunset.

The sky between the boughs overhead turned from blue to vivid crimson, and suddenly Dick gave an excited exclamation: 'Sandy—listen!... Don't you hear something?'

Both boys sat silent, with tightly-held breath. Very faintly at first, but yet quite distinctly, they heard the thud of hoofs through the heavy sand, the low jingling of harness-trappings. It came nearer and nearer, and Dick whispered: 'It's Levi and Abbas, I expect. But we must be ready to shout, Sandy, in case it's some one just passing by.'

Soon it became plain that, whoever the newcomers might be, they did not intend to pass. The boys heard a crackling of twigs in the thicket overhead, and the sound of some one dismounting. Breathlessly they waited, dreading, yet longing to know what would happen next.

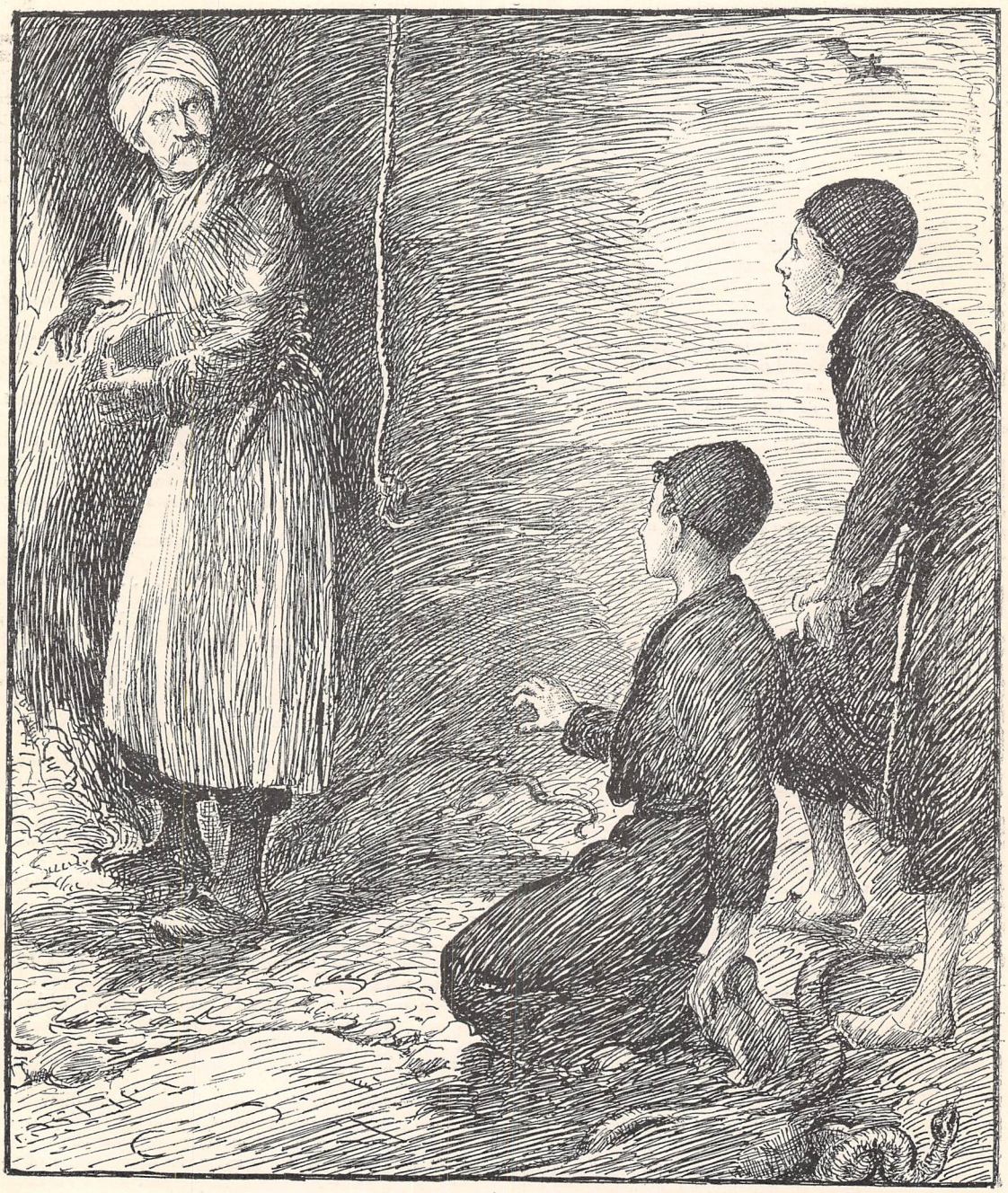
The sound of approaching footsteps over the dry brushwood grew plainer; suddenly against the dying light the figure of a man was silhouetted. He was tall and erect, dressed in the flowing robes of a Moor; and Sandy whispered, under his breath, plucking at Dick's sleeve, 'It's much too tall for Levi or Abbas.'

The newcomer carried a coil of rope, which he proceeded to fasten to the same tree which the Jews had used for their ladder. Then he began to descend, whilst the boys waited, holding their breath in suspense.

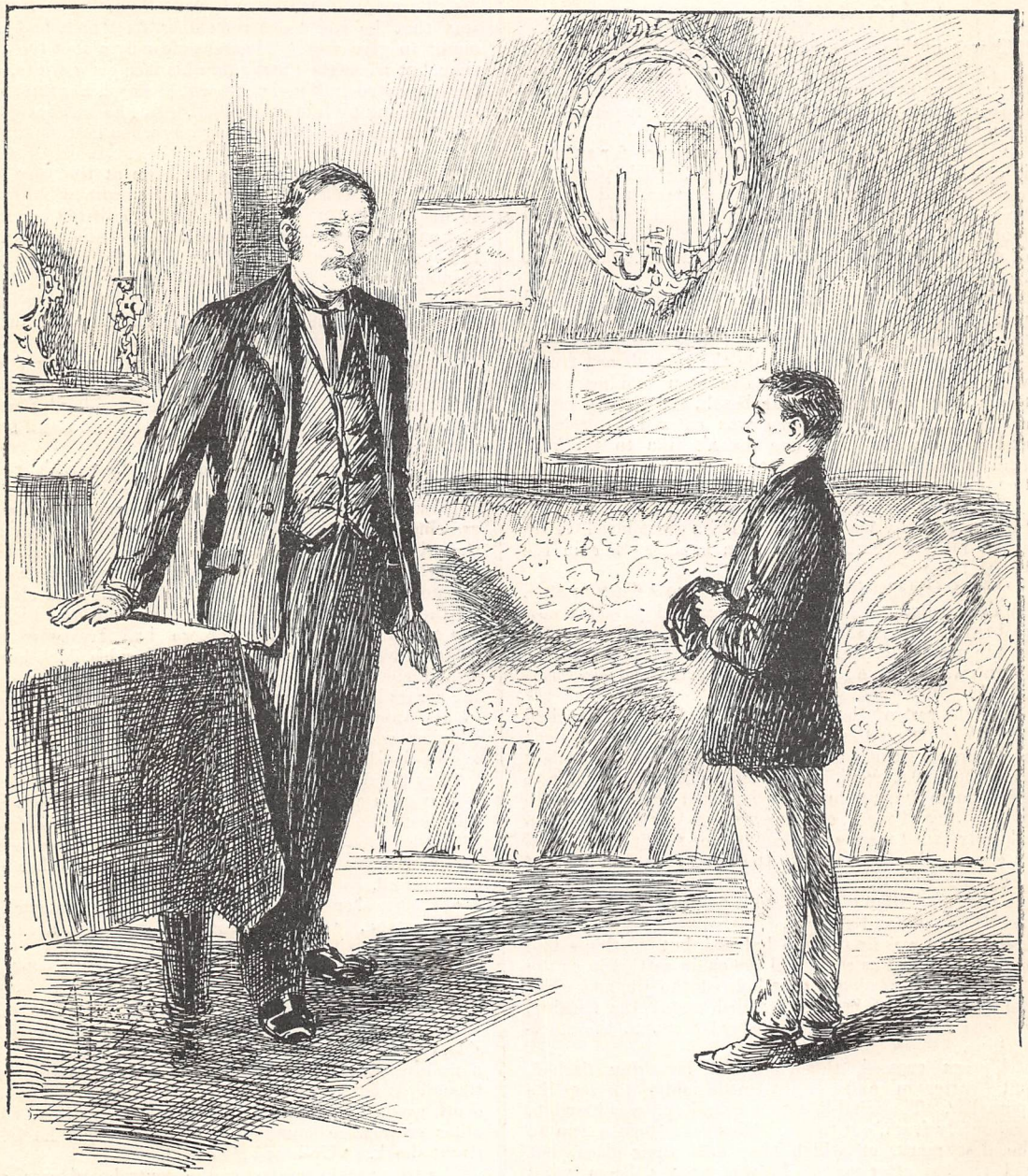
Once within the pit, it was impossible to distinguish the man, but his heavy breathing could be heard, and the thud of his feet when they touched the bottom. Then, after a pause, there came the sharp sound of flint on steel, followed by the steady upburning of a candle-flame.

The face of the stranger was plainly visible now. Both the boys saw at the same moment that it was Langridge!

(*Continued on page* 237.)



"Both the boys saw at the same moment that it was Langridge."



"What he said to the clockmaker, no one else knew."

HOW 'WYVERN' WON THE CUP.

By Harold Bindloss.

(*Concluded from page* 203.)

IT was unthinkable that they should go back without seeing the regatta, which meant that food for the day and the next must be found. Patterson had half-a-crown, Elliot a shilling, and Watkin ninepence-halfpenny.

'Four shillings for grub and threepence for sundries is cutting it very fine,' Watkin said. 'It's plain that we can't waste sixpence on a telegram, and getting breakfast ashore is out of the question. Luckily, I found a spirit-stove in the boat, and there's a good deal of nourishment in bread and jam. The next thing is to look for a shop.'

They found a shop, but missed Patterson, who looked preoccupied when he overtook them. Going on board, they lighted the spirit-stove and were sitting at breakfast on the wet floorings beside the centreboard trunk, when Patterson remarked: 'I've been looking round the boats of our class on the beach, and they're rather a scratch lot. The *Wyvern* was entered beforehand, and now we *are* here, one doesn't like to think of Elliot's cousin losing the money. It would be pretty fine if we came back with the cup.'

Elliot dropped the pot of marmalade, which upset. 'I don't see why we shouldn't. It's a great idea! After all, a race would be easier than handling her in the breeze last night.'

'Some folks,' said Watkin, 'don't know when to stop. You've spoiled old Harding's garden and pulled a new racing sail out of shape by reefing it when it was wet. In the meantime, you'd better scrape up that marmalade. I don't want to live for two days on bread and condensed milk.'

For the rest of the morning they slept and dawdled about, and when the band and flagship arrived at noon and a crowd gathered on the pier, sat thoughtfully silent over their next meal. It would be a great exploit to bring home the cup, but they had had some experience of handling *Wyvern*, and knew smart work is needed in a keenly-sailed race, where a blunder might sink a rival or capsize the boat. Still, the wind was lighter and *Wyvern* very fast. At length a number was hoisted on the pier, and Elliot glanced at his programme. 'Our race next!' he said, and stopped.

Patterson was first at the halyard, but Watkin seized the cable almost as soon, and the chain rattled in as the lugsail went up. Then they hoisted the jib, and when the smoke of the first gun rolled about the flagship, *Wyvern* and five other craft edged down to the starting-line.

Wyvern crossed, third, as the last gun flashed, and Patterson and Elliot made shift to set the spinnaker. The wind had gone round and was blowing, moderately fresh, out to sea. This gave them a run to the first mark, at which they held their place, but had trouble afterwards. It was now a beam wind to the next mark and the spinnaker must come down; but a spinnaker is an awkward sail to handle, and Patterson let it get into the water.

Wyvern was fourth before they got things straight, but she began to pick up, and soon after they rounded the next mark she was second. It was now a dead beat up the narrow channel against the tide, and the leading boat worked cross-tacks with them. Watkin, who sat with set lips at the helm, had some bad moments when the other, listing down with her lee deck buried in foam, drove towards him. The trouble was that he could not remember on which tack one ought to give way. He went clear by a foot the first time, but when they met again his face grew white. If the other struck *Wyvern* she would smash her thin, varnished planking like an eggshell. But he was not going to lose some seconds by giving way when he thought his part was to hold on.

The other skipper put up his helm at the very last moment, and Watkin knew he had meant to bluff him to his disadvantage. *Wyvern* had weathered her rival and on the next tack was clear ahead. She had only a few yards' advantage, but her crew thought she was gaining. Still, it was not far to the flagship, and there might be time to allow on the handicap. Racing boats start level, and the time they give each other is deducted when they finish.

'If we're in first I won't mind not winning,' said Elliot. 'Drive her, Watkin! Sail her ramping full!'

'Then don't wriggle about—it deadens her,' Watkin replied. 'Slide into the cockpit gently, and stand by to lift the centreboard.'

'But you want it down—you're on the wind.'

'Stand by, all the same.'

Now, a centreboard helps a boat to windward by increasing her depth, and the tide was against them and the wind ahead. Watkin, however, had not time enough to beat his rival and allow for a possible handicap unless he took some risk. The stream was slacker on the sands outside the channel, but this was because the water shoaled. The breeze had freshened and *Wyvern* was sailing very fast, with her lee deck buried some inches in rushing foam and showers of spray beating across her weather bow. He was not much ahead of his antagonist when the latter swept through the eddying water at the edge of the channel and stood across the shoal.

'Try the depth,' he said.

Patterson plunged down the boathook. 'Bottom—four feet!' he cried; and then, with a gasp, 'It's gone!'

The boathook, wrenched from his grasp, drove away astern, and Watkin put down his helm as the other boat came round.

'Fixed-keel craft!' he remarked, as *Wyvern* started on another tack. 'Skipper knows we have got a centreboard.'

'Then he knows we draw more water,' Elliot rejoined.

'We do,' said Watkin, drily, 'when the board's *down*.'

When they drove through the tide-ripple on the other side, their antagonist was a little farther astern. One more long tack ought to take them across the line, and, though Watkin knew by the sandy water that the depth was shoaling fast, he let *Wyvern* stand on. The other crew were sounding with an oar, and he felt a slight shock. 'Up-board!' he said.

The wire tackle creaked as the centreboard rose, and *Wyvern* drove on, drawing less water than before. Her antagonist suddenly stopped and listed down, while her crew shoved with boathook and oars. Then *Wyvern* came round and raced away, alone, for the flagship. There was a cheer as they rushed past, but Watkin quietly mopped his face. It was a glorious moment, but he felt some strain.

While they stowed the sails a punt came off and Elliot gazed at the man astern. 'It's Tom!' he said. 'We've rather spoiled that sail, and there are some other things. You forgot to put the grub away and it's got trodden on. Still, we won the cup for him.'

Tom came on board and looked round the boat before he made any remark. Then he regarded her crew ironically. 'Wet bread, marmalade, and condensed milk all over her below! Boathook gone, compass smashed, and I observed when you were beating up that the new lugsail is badly stretched. It's lucky I was able to come down when I got a telegram that you had run off with the boat.'

'We saved her,' Elliot protested. 'Besides, we've won the cup.'

'Pretty expensive salvage!' her owner rejoined. 'However, as you won the cup you'd better get it, if you can. This is a *town* regatta—not a yacht club race.'

The boys went on board the flagship, and after a time the secretary asked their business.

'We've come for the cup,' Elliot explained.

'Ah!' said the secretary. 'Then you want your prize?'

'Certainly,' Patterson answered. 'What do you imagine?'

The secretary looked thoughtful. 'Yachtsmen sometimes give a prize back for an extra race. You see, it's really meant for the local boats.'

'But you advertised your prize-list to bring strangers here. It said, "Handsome Silver Cup, presented by Philip Boone."'

'Just so,' agreed the secretary. 'So far as I know, it's not presented yet. Perhaps you had better see Mr. Boone.'

Watkin asked where he was to be found, but the secretary said he didn't know. Mr. Boone was a clockmaker and jeweller, but his shop was closed, and he lived out of town. The boys then rowed to the pier, and Tom, who met them, smiled when they told their tale. 'I have,' he said, 'heard something like this before. In fact, my opinion is that the fellow expected he mightn't have to give the prize at all. I imagine you had better let the matter drop.'

'We won the cup, and I'm going to get it,' Watkin replied.

After making some inquiries, he hired a bicycle, and rode off up a long, steep hill. What he said to the clockmaker nobody else knew, but he left the house with a red face, and fastened a bulky package to the back of the rusty bicycle. Then he rode into the town and found Tom and the others getting tea at an hotel.

'Well,' said the former, 'how did you get on?'

'I've got the cup,' said Watkin; 'at least, it's a china clock. But I want half-a-crown to pay for the bicycle.'

Tom leaned back in his chair and laughed. 'Good man! You got more than I expected. But let's see the thing.'

Watkin unwrapped a gaudy timepiece and regarded it proudly. 'It says "Cuckoo!" if you turn this key. I had to take a firm line and tell him I'd sit there until to-morrow unless I got something.'

Tom laughed again, while the others rocked with amusement.

'The cup's a china clock—it says "Cuckoo!"' Patterson exclaimed in a breathless voice.

'Well,' said Tom to Watkin, 'you're a determined young man; you won the race and you got—the clock. I suppose we shall have to say nothing about the damage you did over the job; but next time you race in *Wyvern* I'll be skipper.'

THE AUSTRALIAN SINGING-BIRD.

(*Concluded from page* 228.)

THE village schoolroom was packed, and the concert, which was being given in aid of some charitable object, was in full swing, when somebody handed the Rector a telegram. It was to say that one of the singers whose services he had secured was unable to come that night. The Rector was in rather a difficulty, for musical talent was very, very scarce in the village.

'Children,' said Mrs. Belford (shortly after the arrival of the disappointing telegram) to Hal, Dorothy, and May, 'you'll have to sing one or two of the songs I taught you last winter. We'll choose those with a good chorus.'

'Oh, Mother,' cried Dorothy, 'we *couldn't!* Just fancy, facing all these people!'

And so agreed Hal and May. Mrs. Belford looked quite worried.

'Let Greta sing,' said Dorothy next, rather disagreeably. 'She's always wanting to help you.'

Greta flushed a vivid crimson. The idea of singing in public was nearly as alarming to her—but not quite—as a pailful of 'snakes.' The child, although none of her English relatives guessed the fact, possessed an exquisite little voice, clear and sweet as a bell. She knew also several old-world songs by heart, having been well and carefully taught by her mother.

'Auntie dear,' she said, after just a few minutes' hesitation, 'I think I could help you. I know two or three songs that Mother taught me, and——'

'Dear child, if you only would,' interrupted Mrs. Belford. What songs are they?'

Greta, looking a little bit frightened, named them. Fortunately the accompanist knew them too, and was able to play the songs from memory.

A short while later the little maid stood before her audience. At first the voice was very low and tremulous, and then somehow Greta managed to forget all about her listeners. Once more she was with 'Mother' in the far Australian land, singing the old sweet songs in the dusky twilight. Clearer and sweeter rang the little voice, gaining both strength and expression as the song proceeded. All too soon for her audience the ballad ended, and Greta was about to step down from the platform. But she was not allowed to do so.

'Encore! Encore!' shouted a score of lusty voices in the room.

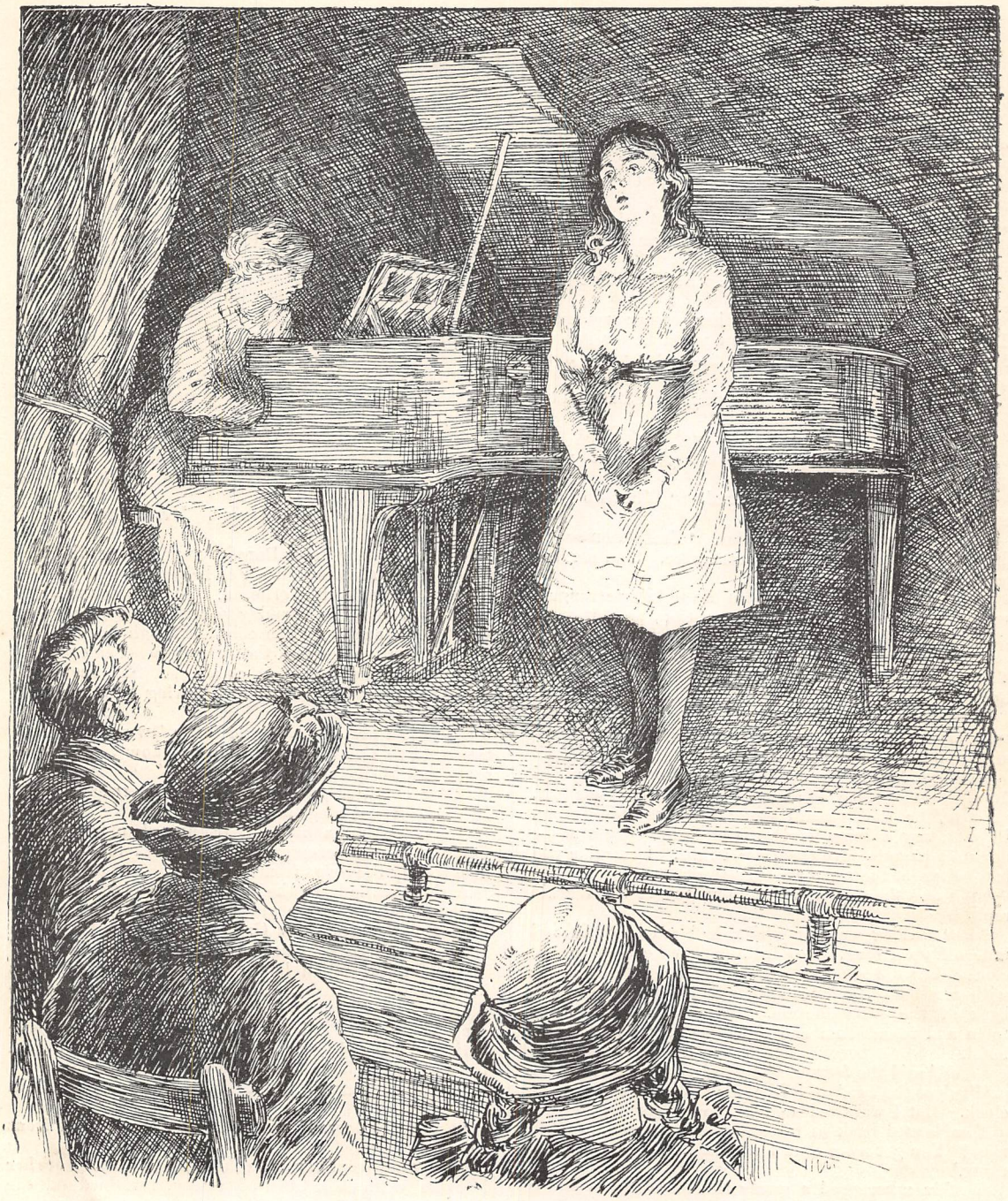
'Encore! Encore!' cried the old Squire in the front row.

At a word from her uncle the little girl, who wore her honours without a trace of vanity, remained on the platform, and, a song having been selected, her voice once again delighted her audience.

Without a doubt little Greta that night was Queen of Song.

* * * *

'Greta,' said Hal, as the children together made their way home in the starlight, 'I'll never call you a coward



"Then, somehow, Greta managed to forget all about her listeners."

again. You had more pluck this evening than the three of us put together.'

Strange to say, this praise pleased Greta far more than all the applause which she had received.

And to do Hal justice, he never *did* call her a coward again. From that time forward the three young Belfords and 'the Australian Singing-bird'—as the village folk now called the little maid—were the very best of friends.

MARIAN ISABEL HURRELL.

"The task at last completed, all three ascended to the surface."

HELD TO RANSOM.

(Continued from page 231.)

CHAPTER XII.

A SIMULTANEOUS exclamation broke from Dick and Sandy, and Langridge started so violently that he almost dropped the candle. Then he leant forward, peering at them, as he shielded the flame with his hand.

An expression of utter amazement crossed his face, and he spoke incredulously. 'You—!' he said. '*You!* How, in the name of all that's unholy, did you get here?'

His voice was rough and almost fierce with surprise;

he caught Sandy by the shoulder and shook him impatiently before Dick had time to answer.

'The Jews caught us again that evening, and brought us here. And it's the very same pit where our stone was hidden; they'd found it, and wanted to know what it meant. But of course we wouldn't tell them anything; it wasn't likely.'

'So they left us here to s-starve,' Sandy said shakily. He was terribly hungry and thirsty, and thoroughly overwrought. And Langridge's manner was disappointing; he seemed, somehow, more annoyed than pleased. His voice and expression had changed, however, when he spoke again.

'You kids gave me quite a shock! For the moment I didn't know if I was standing on my head or my heels,' he declared. 'Although, as a matter of fact, I needn't have been so much taken by surprise, considering that I have been following you ever since you disappeared.'

'Have you really, sir?' Dick said gratefully.

'Of course. Didn't I promise to help you? I guessed at once that those brutes of Jews must have caught you again, and when I made inquiries, I found that they had left Mogador hurriedly that evening. Well, I only waited to collect a few necessaries before setting out on your tracks. It was a regular game of hide-and-seek; now and then I'd find some clue, then lose the trail for a bit—but here I am, and all's well that ends well.'

'However did you know where the pit was?' Sandy asked.

'I managed to find it, didn't I? You don't know what a Sherlock Holmes you've struck.'

'We're most tremendously obliged to you,' said Dick warmly.

'Oh, I don't mind a bit of bother! Besides, I have taken rather a liking for you two lads.'

'That's jolly lucky for us!' Dick answered. 'Look—the stone's here, exactly as our book said. Wasn't it extraordinary, our being brought here?'

'Yes. People wouldn't believe it, if you put it in a book, eh? So that's the famous stone; looks like a monument of some sort, doesn't it? Well, our best plan, I think, is to make some sort of a copy, and then get out of this unholy hole as quickly as possible.'

'I wonder—could we have something to eat first?' Dick said.

'Hungry, are you? Poor little beggars! Yes, I'll get some grub at once, if you don't mind waiting a minute.'

Langridge climbed up the rope, and returned in a few instants with some bread, a big lump of figs, and a flask of thin raisin wine. 'Eat as much as you want,' he said. 'In the meantime, I'll copy the writing on the stone.'

He pulled out a pocket-book and pencil, and copied the roughly-cut inscription slowly and carefully. 'There, that'll be handier to carry about with us than the tombstone itself,' he said at last with a laugh. 'And now, if you agree, I really think we'd better erase the writing itself. Those villainous Jews are certain to come back, and they might somehow get ahead of us, if the directions are left here for them to find.'

After a little consideration, Dick and Sandy thoroughly agreed with Langridge's suggestion. He first made each of them compare his copy carefully with the writing on the stone, so as to be assured that there were no mistakes, and then stowed it away in his girdle. Afterwards, with the help of a big native knife, they so thoroughly blurred the inscription that it was quite indecipherable.

This task at last completed, all three ascended to the surface, and Langridge hauled up the rope. It was delightful to be free again, to breathe the clean, fresh night air after the mouldy stuffiness of the pit. Two donkeys were tethered to the trees, one being saddled, the other bearing a heavy pack.

'I think we'd better push on at once,' Langridge said. 'If the Jews should turn up, I've no doubt they'd make themselves uncommonly nasty.'

After their long sleep, both Dick and Sandy felt particularly lively. They assented eagerly to Langridge's plans, and the little party set out. Langridge walked and the boys rode the donkey in turn, and they progressed thus for some hours until Sandy began to nod on his perch, and Dick, scarcely less tired, was practically asleep as he walked.

Both were heartily glad when, at last, just as dawn was breaking, Langridge proposed that they should camp. 'I've only one small tent,' he said. 'But you two lads can crowd into it. I'll lie outside and keep a look-out.'

Dick's protests were not convincing. In less than a quarter of an hour, he and Sandy were sleeping soundly.

(*Continued on page* 244.)

EDUCATION.

'MY dears,' said a thrush to her young, 'you are growing;
Your wings are quite strong, and your speckles are showing;
And, shortly, each one must provide his own ration—
So, to fit you for life, we must start education.
Turn your beaks to attention, be still—if you can—
And I'll tell of a curious creature called *Man*.
You will know him at once, he's no feathers, but clothes;
He pretends not to mind, but it's only a pose.
In truth he is jealous, no wonder! poor thing—
Fancy life without feathers—not even a wing!
Attached to his body, like limbs to a tree,
Are two arms, in the place where the wings ought to be.
To-morrow we'll study still further his features—
My knowledge is great of these curious creatures.
Meanwhile, let me read you a table of rules
To be taken to heart by all thrushes in schools:
A currant will come off its string if you pull it—
Beware of a little round ball called a bullet—
The rosiest cheek of a cherry's the sweetest—
Of bullets and wings—well, the bullet's the fleetest,
So, when you would visit a tree for a trifle,
Just ascertain first if the rook-boy's a rifle;
Perhaps, just at first, while you're only a flapper,
You may think it's a gun when it's merely a clapper,
But soon, if you study, you'll learn all the dodges,
The tricks and contrivance of old Farmer Hodges—
How his peas are but guarded by clothes on a pole—
Which net on his strawberries has the best hole—
The date when his gardener gathers the plums—
The door whence his little girl scatters the crumbs
These things you will learn, and a great many more,
But, enough for to-day, hark! the clock's striking four;
Now smooth out your feathers, and straighten your tails,
And doze in the sun while I search for some snails.'

LILIAN HOLMES.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 227.)

CHAPTER X.

JIMMY had expected that after what had passed between him and Williams, near Farstead Broad, he would have a worse time than before with his fag-master. He had expressed his contempt for him in the presence of Norman and Pilling, and Williams had made no retort for the moment. But it was not to be supposed, seeing the refined sort of bully that Williams was, that he would stand being 'cheeked' in that way before two other boys, one of the Middle School, the other of the Lower, without making Jimmy suffer for it in some way. He would probably have thought of something by the time Jimmy had to meet him again; and Jimmy went in to his room to see to his fire, which was one of his chief regular duties, bracing himself up for whatever should come.

Williams was sitting in his basket-chair beside the fire. He took no notice whatever of Jimmy, as he put coal on, and swept up the hearth, which he had learnt to do very carefully, so as not to bring Williams down on him. He was quite used to his fag-master's pretending to be ignorant of his presence when he first came into the room. It was one of Williams's ways of keeping him on tenter-hooks, and was usually followed by some insulting form of address.

'Leave off making that noise,' said Williams, when Jimmy had nearly finished, having made as little noise as possible, 'and listen to what I've got to say to you.'

Jimmy stood up, with the hearth-broom in his hand. 'Put that down,' said Williams. 'Didn't your mother tell you that in her housemaid days it wasn't respectful to talk to her mistress with a broom in her hand?'

The coarse insult failed for once of its effect. Somehow Jimmy did not feel even hurt by it, although he had felt it terribly when Williams had first hit upon this brutal way of hurting his feelings. He had only to think of his young, pretty mother, and the respect and affection with which she was treated by every one who lived near her and knew her, from the highest to the lowest, to be able to feel nothing but contempt for this particular form of insult. He put down the broom in its proper place, and walked across the room towards the door.

'Where are you going?' asked Williams, in his soft, silky voice. 'How dare you move when I am speaking to you?'

Jimmy turned round, with his hand on the door-handle, and faced him. 'I'll do whatever I'm obliged to do for you as your fag,' he said. 'But I won't stay and hear you say beastly things about my mater.' Then he went out of the room.

A little later on Williams sent for him. He made no reference to what had passed, but told him to go to the school stationer for some blotting-paper.

'There isn't time before Call-over,' said Jimmy.

Williams pointed to the clock on the mantelpiece. 'There's plenty of time,' he said. 'If you don't do what you're told you'll get the rubber.'

There were certain well-defined duties which a fag had to do, of which fetching stationery was one. If he didn't do them his fag-master had the right to administer correction. This was supposed to be done with a slipper, but a new effective weapon had been found to be a rubber-soled shoe, which was in general use for the purpose, and was known as 'the rubber.'

Jimmy was convinced that Williams had put back his clock five minutes, for the purpose of entrapping him, for if he refused to run the errand Williams would probably rubber him there and then, and wait until later to show surprise at his clock being wrong; if he was late for Call-over he would get lines.

He did not wait to argue the point as to the clock, but ran out of the room instantly, and tore out of the house without waiting to get his cap, and down the street to the stationer's. It was the custom to 'book' orders for Prefects, and this would take some little time, as the fag had to sign a book. But Jimmy had a penny ready in his hand. 'A sheet of blotting-paper, please, as quickly as you can, or I shall be late for C. O.'

By some lucky chance, some sheets of blotting-paper were lying on the counter just by the hand of the young woman who stood behind it, and by another lucky chance was disengaged. She slipped a sheet out and handed it to Jimmy, who seized it, put his penny down on the counter, and flew out of the shop. It was about a hundred yards from the shop to Stanhope's, and Jimmy ran the distance in a time that surprised even himself. He slipped in at the door just as the House butler was about to close and lock it, having already rung the great bell, and entered the Hall with the last boys, breathless, but triumphant.

It was Williams's week as House Prefect. As he read over the list of names and ticked them off, Jimmy, standing at the back of the Hall, told Pilling what he had done. 'I really don't believe I was out of the house more than half-a-minute,' he said.

'Good boy!' said Pilling. 'But what a scug the fellow is! Has he seen you come in?'

Williams apparently had not, for when Jimmy's name came to be called, he seemed about to pass on to the next, and could not help looking up in surprise when he heard Jimmy's 'Adsum.'

'Sucks for you!' said Pilling, in an audible voice, as Williams ticked off Jimmy's name, and told a few others what had happened before Call-over was finished.

When Williams came down the Hall, Jimmy held out the blotting-paper to him. 'Here's your slosh-sheet,' he said.

Williams took it, and seemed to be about to say something, but passed out of the Hall, ironically cheered by the little group of lower boys who had heard Jimmy's story. Jimmy was encouraged to call after him: 'I'm afraid your clock must be wrong. Shall I come up and alter it for you?'

Williams turned round sharply. 'Yes, do,' he said, 'Get the exact time.'

'You're an ass, Henshaw,' said Pilling. 'He's got an excuse for rubbering you now.'

'What for?' asked Jimmy.

'Why, for cheek. He couldn't very well do anything to us for laughing at him, but he can take it out of you for setting us on.'

Jimmy went upstairs. Williams had a buckskin shoe with a heavy red rubber sole ready for him. This made a formidable weapon in the hands of any one who had the strength to use it, and went far beyond a reasonable development of the use of a slipper.

(*Continued on page* 242.)

"She slipped a sheet out and handed it to Jimmy."

"Jimmy struggled and writhed, but could not free himself."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 239.)

THE moment he got inside the room, Jimmy said, 'If you rubber me I'll report you to Bertram for bullying; and I'll tell the Prefects what a beast you've been.'

The threat might have deterred Williams, if he had thought over it. His record for a refined kind of bullying, which escaped physical violence, was well known, and did not make him liked by the other Prefects. If certain of the things he had said to Jimmy were to be repeated publicly, they would certainly damage his reputation in the school.

But his blood was up for once, and he took no notice of the threat. He made a dive for Jimmy, and caught him by the arm. Though not built on a big scale, he was a man of muscle and fibre, for he kept himself in scientific training. Jimmy struggled and writhed, but could not free himself, and the heavy shoe, wielded with all Williams's strength, and his unrestrained anger to back it, rained blows upon him. His struggles only resulted in his receiving them upon every part of his body, and one of them caught him on the face, where a jugged edge of the hard rubber drew blood.

Williams desisted at last, and stood panting and still white with fury. His brutal nature, the excesses of which he usually kept in check, had broken its bounds. He was no longer the self-restrained cynical character who wounded only with his tongue; but a savage whose nature and inclinations would carry him to almost any length of ferocity.

Jimmy was panting, too, and sobbing, more with rage than self-pity. He had been much hurt; but the fight he had put up prevented him from feeling it at the time. He did not even know that blood was pouring from his cheek, and that a great discoloured swelling was beginning to show itself where the heavy rubber had scored his face. 'You beast! You beast!' he shouted, and then ran out of the room, with no idea as to where he was going.

In the passage outside he ran tilt into Manning, who caught hold of him by the shoulder, and said, 'Hullo, young fellow! You seem to be in a bit of a hurry.'

His face changed as he saw Jimmy's state, and the blood that was now dripping on to his collar and jacket. He threw a glance at Williams's door, and said to Jimmy: 'Come along with me. We'll inquire into this.'

He led him into Bertram's room. Bertram was sitting at his table busy with his interminable puzzles. 'Look here,' said Manning, indicating the sobbing, infuriated Jimmy. 'What's going to be done about this? Our friend Williams. We've got him now, I think.'

CHAPTER XI.

There was a full meeting in the Prefects' room. Bertram sat at the head of the table. On his right was Manning. The other Prefects were Norris and Williams. Jimmy, with his face washed and plastered, and a clean collar on, sat at the foot of the table. He was feeling very sore and bruised, and shaken too; but he had resisted the attempts of the House Matron to send him to bed. She had come across him in the dormitory, and he had hidden from her the extent of his injuries, as also the cause of them.

Bertram opened the proceedings. 'Williams is accused of systematic bullying of his fag,' he said. 'Everybody here knows that the whole system of fagging depends upon fag-masters treating their fags properly. The right was once taken away in this House for a term, because it was abused, and the Prefects were told that they would have to deal with abuses of it themselves for the future. If they didn't do this it would be taken away for good. As you know, it was taken away from Bretherton's House a few terms ago.'

Most of this was news to Jimmy; but the Prefects present were generally aware that the whole fag system was viewed with some dislike by the authorities, and was in danger of abolishment. It rested with them to keep it in being, as far as their own House was concerned, for, if they did not stop abuses of it, it would disappear, and not be revived.

Williams had recovered his temper. He was a little paler than ordinary; otherwise there was nothing to show that he was suffering any inconvenience of mind. To see him sitting in his chair at the table very neatly dressed, as usual, and toying with a pencil and a sheet of paper, one would have thought that he was simply deliberating with his fellow-Prefects, and had no special concern in what should follow.

He looked up sharply, and asked: 'Who accuses me of systematic bullying? I'm supposed to have rubbered my fag too heavily. That's all. I rubbered him for gross cheek, which I had a perfect right to do, and it was the first time I had ever laid a finger on him.'

Boys are at heart as apt as men to conduct a serious inquiry according to set rules. Williams had been summoned to a Prefects' meeting because of the damage he had caused to Jimmy, not on any charge of general bullying. Bertram hesitated.

But Manning said indignantly: 'This isn't a Court of Law. We're going to get to the bottom of the whole business, and we're not going to have our hands tied by pettifogging little points of order. If nobody has accused you of systematic bullying, I accuse you now, and it's that we're going to examine into.'

He looked straight at Williams as he spoke. It was a direct challenge of a sort that had not before passed between them. Both Manning and Williams were in the Eleven, and although Manning had always rather disliked Williams, and Williams had been jealous of Manning, because his cleverness had not succeeded in gaining him what the other boy had gained by his clean, straightforward behaviour, they had hidden their mutual antipathy. In the eyes of the school they were good friends, because they were often seen together.

'Oh, very well,' said Williams, shrugging his shoulders. 'It's just as well to know what one has to meet. If it's a dead set against me on your part, I suppose I shall have to be careful. Otherwise, it would be easy enough to prove that there hasn't been any bullying.'

'Well, then, prove it,' said Manning shortly, thus taking away much of the effect that Williams's insinuation of enmity on his part might have created.

There was a slight pause. 'As you've made the accusation Manning,' said Bertram, 'you had better bring the charge.'

'All right,' said Manning, rising from his seat. 'What I say is that Williams has been bullying Henshaw

systematically, and I stick to the word. I don't care whether he has done it with his hands or his tongue. We all know what use he makes of his tongue, and we know that he treated the fag he had last term in such a way that he asked that he might fag for somebody else.'

'What a terrible charge!' said Williams. 'Did the young gentleman make any complaints of being bullied?'

Manning took no notice of this sneer. 'As long as it was only tongue-lashing,' he said, 'I suppose we couldn't interfere. To that extent Williams may be right in his objections. But in this case there is actual bullying which we *can* take hold of. He has rubbered Henshaw in a way I've never known done since I came to the school. We can take that by itself. But I'm not going to leave the other out of account. Before we look into the rubbering, I say that it's only part of a system of bullying that has been going on since the beginning of term.'

He sat down abruptly. 'Now he can tell his story,' he said, 'about the rubbering.'

Williams rose deliberately. 'It's soon told,' he said. 'I sent Henshaw to get me **a** slosh-sheet. My clock was slow, and I didn't know till the bell went that he'd hardly have time to do it. But he did get back in time, and was so cocky about it that he cheeked me when I was taking Call, and as I went out of Hall he and other Lower Boys jeered at me. I took no notice; but he called out after me rudely, and that decided me to give him a rubbering. You know perfectly well that cheek to a Prefect while he's taking Call is *always* rubbered. There isn't one of you that hasn't rubbered a boy for it himself. This cheek was about as strong as it could be, especially getting half-a-dozen other Lower boys to join in it, and I dare say I laid it on harder than I need have done, for I was annoyed. But he kicked, and bit, and scratched, and perhaps I lost my temper a bit. I certainly never meant to hit him over the face. That was when he was twisting himself about, and was an accident. I'm sorry for it.'

It all sounded very reasonable, and most of Jimmy's bruises were hidden from view.

'Do you agree with all that?' Bertram asked Jimmy.

(*Continued on page* 255.)

MALAY GUN-BARRELS.

THE Malays have long been famous for the excellence of their weapons. Among these are firearms which are both serviceable and beautiful. They are made by native workers, who possess only the rudest of tools, but by patient and persevering industry they obtain astonishing results.

Malay guns have barrels six or seven feet long, which are often inlaid with silver and gold, arranged in beautiful patterns. The guns are in general shape somewhat like European weapons, but the stocks extend quite to the end of the barrel.

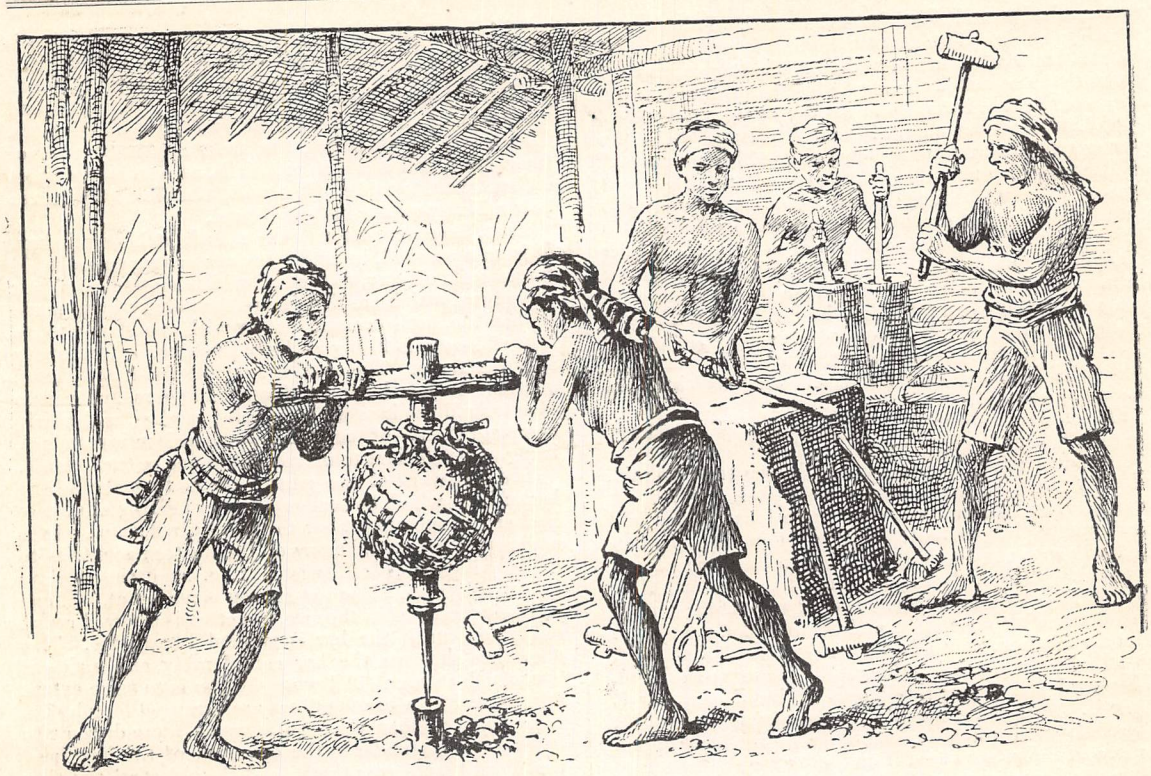
The barrel of a gun must be exceedingly strong, in order to resist the force of the explosion of the powder, and at the same time absolutely straight and true within, in order to direct the shot properly. The mechanism by which the powder or other explosive is fired in one of our modern guns or rifles is very delicate and rather complicated; but in former times much simpler means of firing the powder were employed, and these are the means still used by semi-civilised races. The barrel is, therefore, the most important part of their guns, and the one which is, as a rule, the most difficult part to make. We will, therefore, try to see how a Malay makes his gun-barrel.

First, however, let us take a look at his workshop. It is an open shed, in which are one or two cone-shaped forges built of clay, to each of which is attached a pair of bellows, which are little more than air-syringes made of bamboo, both communicating with one blast-pipe, so that while one is filling with air the other is forcing air into the forge. The anvil is simply a flat-topped lump of iron. A few hammers, files, and borers, and a little vice to hold the iron which is being worked, will nearly complete the list of tools. The stock of iron is not large, being only sufficient to make perhaps one or two barrels.

The first work of the gun-maker is to make a little bar of iron, which he accomplishes by heating a lump of iron and hammering it out to the required shape. It is a general custom in many of the Eastern countries to make gun-barrels of twisted iron, and the Malays follow this plan. The bar of iron is made hot, and one end being inserted in the vice, the other is screwed round and round until the bar is twisted like a rope. This operation shortens the bar considerably, and makes it very much stouter. All wrought iron is to some extent fibrous, and in a bar the fibres are arranged lengthwise. It is believed that the iron is much more difficult to break or tear asunder in the direction of the length of the fibres than across them; and the object of twisting the iron of these gun-barrels is to lay the fibres round the barrel, so that it can hardly burst without breaking them lengthwise. When the iron has been well twisted, the bar is heated again, and all the joints of the coils are hammered up solid. By this means, a stout bar of twisted iron about eighteen inches long is obtained. The Malay gunsmith makes several of these bars one after another.

The next operation which he undertakes is the boring of a hole down the centre of one of these bars. The piece of iron is buried upright in the ground, with one end projecting a little above the surface. The borers are small iron rods, having one end sharpened in such a way that it cuts into the iron bar when it is steadily turned round upon the end of it. The other end of each bar is made square, and it fits tightly into a ring on the lower end of a stout upright pole. Across the top of this pole a long bamboo rod is fastened horizontally, so that the rod and the pole form a large T-shaped key or handle fitting on the top of the borer, which in its turn rests upon the upturned end of the buried bar. When the borer and its handle are placed in position, two boys, pushing at the ends of the bamboo, walk round and round, as if they were turning a capstan, and thus gradually bore a hole straight through the bar in its long direction. In order to give weight to the borer, and thus force it to work downwards more quickly, a strong bamboo basket is suspended round the upright pole of the handle, and filled with stones.

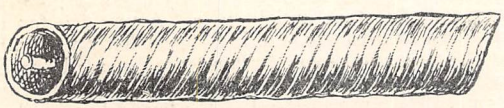
A number of the short, twisted bars are bored in this way with small borers. The next task of the gun-maker is to join together a sufficient number of these short lengths to make a barrel six or seven feet long.



"Two boys walk round and round as if they were turning a capstan."

This he accomplishes by heating two short lengths in his forge, putting an iron rod through them, and hammering their two adjacent ends together until they form a solid union by welding. Another short length is joined on to the end of this longer one in the same way, and thus by degrees a barrel of the required length is built up. The iron rod which is passed through the pieces keeps them all in a straight line, and also prevents the bore from being closed up by the hammering which the barrel receives.

The hole running through the barrel is, however, too small for shooting, and the barrel is set up in the ground again and bored throughout its length in the same way



A Malay Gun-barrel in the making—a twisted bar of iron.

as before. It is, in fact, bored several times, a wider borer being used each time, until the hole is large enough for the reception of a proper charge of powder and shot. The borers can only take off a thin cutting or paring of iron, as they go round in the inside of the barrel, and it is only by repeating the operation with wider and wider borers that the hole can be made large enough. The small bore which was first made through the short lengths of the barrel is, however, very useful, as it directs the larger borers in their proper course, and prevents them cutting through the side of the barrel. When the gun-barrel is properly bored it is polished and ornamented on the outer surface, a lock of some sort for firing the powder is added, and a gun-stock of native workmanship completes the weapon. Very often the lock is taken from some old European gun, which has been sold or thrown aside by its owner as useless.

W. A. Atkinson.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 238.)

IT seemed barely more than a few minutes later when they were roused by Langridge. Dick rolled over, yawning and blinking, and saw that their companion's face was grave and anxious.

'Get up at once,' he said curtly. 'We must move on—there may be danger about.'

'What from?' Both Dick and Sandy were very wide awake now.

'I'm not sure as yet, but some scouts have been watching us, and this part of the country is uncommonly unsettled at present. There's trouble between the present Sultan Abdul Aziz and his brother, Mulai Hafid, the pretender. It's too long a story to go into now, but if these are some of Mulai's men—well, I may as well tell you that I'm in a pretty dangerous position. I'm known too well as a supporter of the other party; they'd give a good deal to get me into their power.'

"For barely a moment the rider was visible, then he had disappeared."

As he spoke, Langridge was hastily rolling up the tent and blankets, and strapping them upon the pack-donkey. Plainly he was very uneasy, and his fears naturally infected the two boys. 'The scouts came from the direction of the mountains,' he said. 'We'd better make for the river; once across that we should be fairly safe.'

He examined and loaded his two guns carefully,

carrying one ready in his hand, and they set off once more, the boys again taking it in turns to ride the donkey.

'We're going all the time in the Rabat direction, Langridge told them. 'So if we get through safely, we shall be able to keep on the track of this precious treasure of yours.'

He spoke with a touch of contempt, but the boys were considerably cheered by his words. Knowing nothing of the troubled state of Morocco at that time, and the cruel feuds which raged between the rival Sultans, they did not really realise the danger of capture or death which they and their companion ran. Their own affairs and that of their father still occupied all their thoughts.

Their journey was marked by no events until the middle of the afternoon, when they halted for a few moments to eat. Suddenly Sandy gave a cry, and pointed in the direction from which they had come.

Dick and Langridge turned to look, and saw clearly the figure of a mounted man, silhouetted against the sky on a low rise. He wore the flowing Arab burnouse and carried a long gun. For barely a moment the rider was visible, then he had disappeared.

The look of fierce anxiety returned to Langridge's face, as he peered at the Moor from under his hand. 'One of Mulai's men—I thought as much,' he said. 'They're on our track then.'

'But can't we escape—there's nobody in front of us?' Dick asked.

'We may be able to get over the river in time. Once on the other side I know a village where we should be safe. The ford is scarcely a mile from here, if we can strike it.'

In silence they pushed on, over an arid plain, dotted with patches of dry, untidy-looking growth and glowing like brass in the fierce heat.

Presently, as they topped a low rise, the river came in sight, with steep banks, sloping down sharply. The stream seemed shallow and choked with sand, almost as if an easy way across were open to any one who followed its channel. Such a river, however, is deceitful, as Langridge knew well, and told the boys. Somehow or other, in and out of its banks and shoals, a vast body of water moved towards the sea. There was power and depth too in the sluggish stream.

'We must try and find the ford,' Langridge said. 'Our only chance is to reach the other side before we are overtaken—but they don't seem in any hurry to follow us up.'

He urged on the donkeys as he spoke, then suddenly came to a standstill, with a sharp exclamation, 'It's no use, my lads! We're surrounded. See, there are men upon the other bank!'

'Where? I don't see anything . . .' Dick said, but the other pointed again with an impatient gesture.

'There, behind that low sand-hill. See that frightened hawk; he knows—ah, look!'

A head appeared for an instant against the skyline, and the long barrel of a gun. They disappeared as quickly, but the glimpse was quite enough to convince Dick and Sandy.

'What shall we do?' asked the elder boy, gravely.

'Make our way down stream under the shelter of the bank, and try and cross lower down—that's the only possible chance, and a poor one at that. Ah, look there!'

He pointed behind them with a despairing gesture, and the boys turned to look in the direction from whence they had come.

Scattered in a wide circle over the plain, and fairly hemming them in, were some twenty horsemen. As they approached they drew nearer together; now and again one would ride swiftly for a short way, brandishing his musket triumphantly, then a gun would be fired at random, and the white puff of smoke was followed by the muffled thud of the discharge, deadened by distance, for they were several miles away.

There was no hope of escape towards the rear. No sooner could they move in any direction than their pursuers would concentrate swiftly and cut them off.

(*Continued on page* 252.)

THE OLD HOUSE ON THE HILL.

SPRING'S first sunbeams dance and flicker
O'er its ivy-mantled walls,
Lilacs wave their purple banners,
While the merry cuckoo calls,
And the blackbird and the throstle
All the air with music fill,
And the laughing children frolic
By the old house on the hill.

In the golden Summer weather,
Royal crimson roses blow,
And the children stand on tip-toe,
Pulling down their branches low;
Fountains leaping in the sunlight,
Sparkling showers of rain-drops spill
And the brown bees buzz and murmur
By the old house on the hill.

When the Autumn, gowned in yellow,
Passes smiling through the land,
Hosts of scarlet poppies blossom,
Where the ripened wheat-ears stand,
As the reapers, late and early,
Toil, their labour to fulfil,
And their songs and laughter echo
By the old house on the hill.

When the Winter skies are clouded,
And the fierce North-Easters blow,
Young folks join in Christmas revels,
Though the world is veiled in snow,
Ruddy holly-berries ripen,
Mirth and pleasure linger still
Where the cheery Yule-log glimmers
In the old house on the hill.

MAUD E. SARGENT.

THE TWO NEIGHBOURS.

(From the French of R. F. DE LAMENNAIS.)

TWO men were neighbours. Each had a wife and several little children to support by his labour.

Now, one of these men often felt anxious about the future, and used to think sadly: 'If I die, or fall ill, what will become of my wife and children?'

This thought never left him, and it gnawed at his heart, as a worm eats away the fruit where it is hidden. The same thought occurred to the other father also, but he put it away from him by saying, 'God knows about all His creatures, and watches over them. He will take care of me, my wife, and my children.' So he lived contentedly.

But his neighbour never had a moment's peace or joy. Once he was working in the field, and felt very sad because of his fears. Then he saw some little birds fly into a bush, come out, and after some minutes return there again. Going close to the bush he saw two little nests side by side; there were some tiny fledgings in each, and they were still featherless. When he went back to his work he often raised his eyes to watch the birds as they flew in and out, bringing food to the little ones. Just as one of the mothers was returning with her beak full, a hawk swooped down upon her and carried her away. She struggled vainly in his claws, and uttered piercing cries.

At this sight the man felt his soul more troubled than ever, for he thought, 'The mother's death will mean the children's also. Mine have only their father. What will become of them if I fail them?' He was gloomy and sad all day, and he could not sleep at night.

The following morning, when he went back to the field, he thought, 'I must see the poor motherless birds; some of them will be dead already, for there is no one to feed them.'

He walked over very quietly to the bush, and his surprise was great to see that all the little birds were well, not a single one had perished. So he waited to find out who had taken care of them.

After a short time he heard a little cry, and saw the second mother bringing back food. She fed all the little ones in both nests, and there was enough for all. So the orphans were not left in misery.

In the evening, the father who had distrusted Providence, told the other father what he had seen the birds do, and his neighbour answered quietly, 'Why trouble yourself? God never forsakes His own. His love has secrets about which we know nothing. Believe, hope, love, and go your way in peace. If I die before you, you will be a father to my children, and if you die before me, I will be a father to yours. If we both die before our children are old enough to work for themselves, they will have their Father in Heaven to take care of them.'

THE LITTLE BELL-RINGER.

AT the foot of the Alps lies a little village, close by which runs a river, a mountain torrent, in whose waters are reflected the pointed, slated roofs of the houses nearest to it. The low-lying cottages cluster around the village church, ever pointing heavenward with its graceful bell-tower.

It was a close, heavy sort of day. Thunder, people said, was in the air. The lofty, snow-covered peaks were bathed in sunshine, and the roofs of the hamlets scattered here and there amongst the mountains glistened in the golden rays. The villagers were out in the fields, gathering in their harvest. Only one man, the old bell-ringer, remained in the village. His cottage stood apart from the rest, on the top of a hill.

Jean Machut was sitting by the window, in his high armchair. Crippled by a sudden attack of rheumatism, he could scarcely move. He liked to gaze on the beautiful, distant mountains, or to let his eyes dwell upon the church in the valley below—*his* church, whence he had so often sent forth the sweet chiming of the bells.

Suddenly Jean uttered an exclamation. Surely the river was rising? The current was becoming stronger, more rapid; yellow, dirty-looking waves were mingled with the clear water of the stream. The old ringer was alarmed. 'It is a flood,' he said to himself, 'an inundation!'

He was right: the warmth of the sun upon the glaciers had melted the accumulated snow, and now along all the slopes the water was rushing down in huge cascades, and tumbling into the already swollen river. It overflowed into the valley, rising ever higher and higher, until the bushes were covered with the yellow flood. Branches of trees were swept away and floated on the surface.

The bell-ringer tried to rise, but fell back, groaning.

'André!' he called.

His son came running to him. He was a pretty boy, about twelve years of age, with blue eyes and an open, smiling face.

'Yes, Father?' he said.

'Look!' said his father, pointing to the window.

André was startled by what he saw. 'The river in flood!' he exclaimed.

'What can we do? Oh, what can we do?' moaned Jean Machut.

André reflected for a moment, then suddenly raised his head. 'Of course,' he said, 'the alarm bell must be rung, to recall our people from the fields. They know nothing of the danger which threatens them, and must be warned at any cost; and, as *you* cannot go to ring the bell, Father, *I* will do so.'

'No, no!' protested the old man. 'By now the water must have entered the church; once inside, you would never get out again.'

'*You* would go if you were able to walk?'

'Yes, of course—but *you!*'

'I am going.' And, without waiting for further talk, André ran off. Bounding like a chamois over the rocks and slippery slopes, the boy made his way to the church. His father had not been mistaken: the water was already oozing under the big door into the porch. As André approached he heard cries of distress proceeding from a cottage a little lower down, near the river. He recognised the voice of a child whom he knew, and at once dashed off to the rescue. When he came to the cottage the water there reached half-way up his legs. Entering, he saw, seated at the top of the staircase, a little girl of seven or eight years. Her cheeks were pale with terror and she was crying.

'Are your father and mother in the fields?' asked André.

'Yes,' sobbed the child.

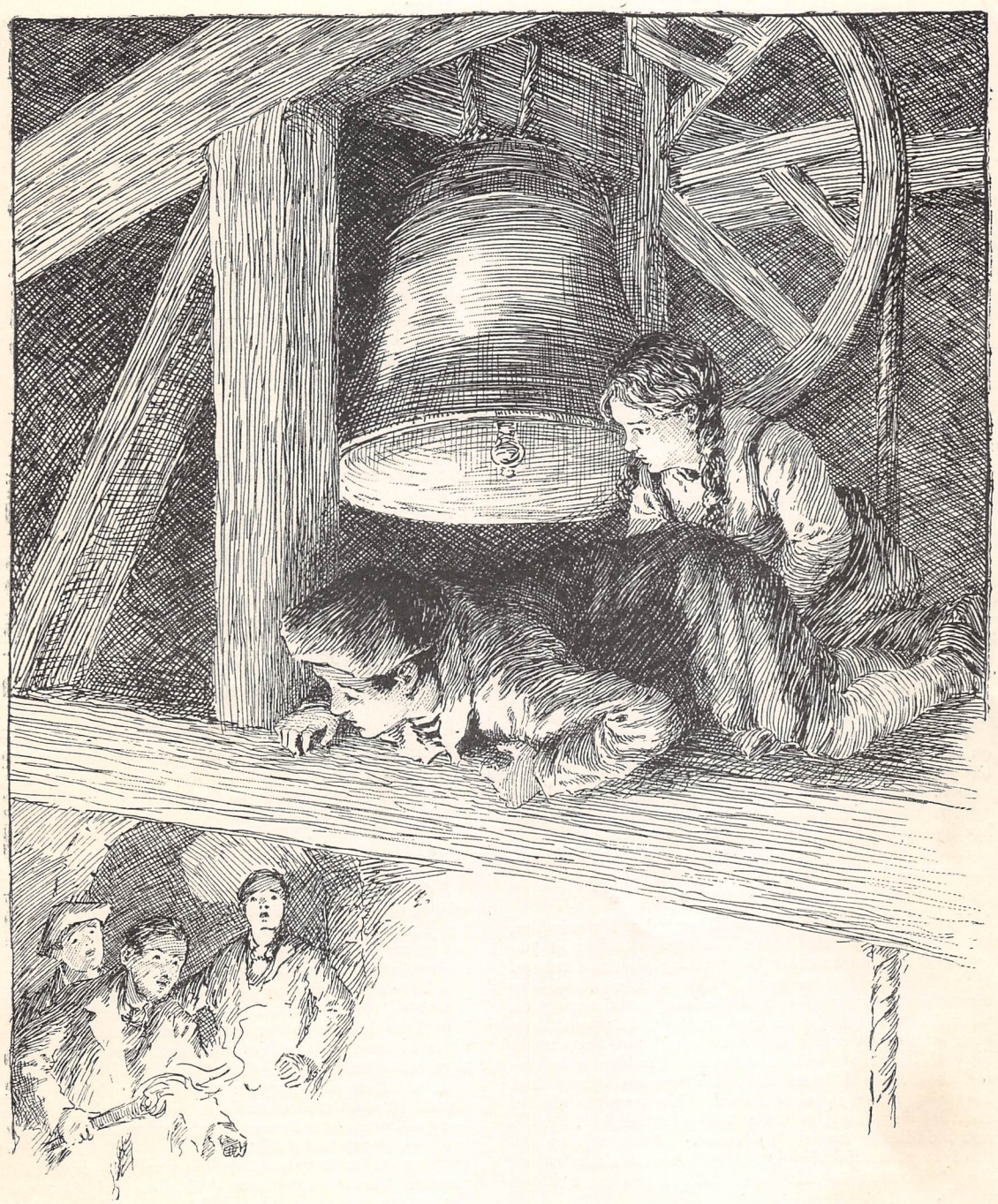
'Come with me—quickly!'

She held out her arms. André caught her in his own, and with all possible speed carried her to the church. The water was still rising. When they reached the porch, André seized the stout rope attached to the big bell, and tugged at it with all his might. At first he produced but a feeble, uncertain sound, but presently the strokes of the bell grew regular and distinct. The boy tolled it thus for some minutes, sending forth his warning far and wide over the surrounding country. The wind had risen, and the growl of thunder resounded amongst the mountains. Tired out, André ceased to ring.

'That's enough,' he said; 'the bell must have been heard in all the villages round about. Our mountaineers will be able to take their beasts and other property up to the heights. Now we will go home to my father. Come, little one!'

(*Concluded on page* 250.)

"Her cheeks were pale with terror."



"The astonished mountaineers looked up."

THE LITTLE BELL-RINGER.

(*Concluded from page* 247.)

THE two children, hand in hand and shivering with cold, waded through the water which flooded the porch. André pulled open the door, and more water came in with a rush. What a terrible scene lay before them! Nothing all around but a sheet of black water, reflecting the lightning-flashes, which almost incessantly played upon it.

The little girl began to cry again. 'I will not go!' she said, shrinking back. 'I *will not* go!'

'Neither will I,' said André; 'we cannot go through that. But what are we to do?' he added, in perplexity. He found it impossible to close the big door again; the force of the water was so great.

He had no fear for himself; he thought only of his duty, which was, he felt, to protect the little friend whom he had already rescued from death.

Suddenly a bright idea came to him. It was the bell-rope which put it into his head. 'We cannot remain here in the water,' he said. 'Besides, it would mount higher and higher and end by drowning us. I am going to carry you on my shoulders up to the place where the bells live.'

'But your shoulders will not reach to the bell-tower,' said the girl, who was still crying.

André laughed. 'No,' he replied; 'but you will ride on my shoulders while I climb up the rope.'

It was no sooner said than done. With the child on his shoulders, the brave boy climbed slowly up the rope, pausing now and then to rest. It took him five minutes to make the ascent. Very long minutes they seemed to André, and thankful he was when he reached the interlaced beams which supported the roof. He had then but to stretch out his legs to land himself and his charge safely in the bell-chamber.

'Here we are!' exclaimed André. 'Sit down, and make yourself at home.'

The little girl, now quite reassured, sat down on one of the great beams, and looked about, examining curiously this strange and unexpected place of refuge.

'I'm hungry,' she announced, when she had finished her inspection.

André felt in his pocket, found there a piece of bread, and gave it to the child.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, Jean Machut, still seated at his window, had heard with satisfaction the steady tolling of the bell, and was now anxiously awaiting his son's return. He saw in the distance carts loaded with goods slowly ascending the mountain, and the shepherds urging on their flocks, but André he could not see. It would have been useless to call out, for he could not have made himself heard at such a distance. Suddenly he recollected his old cornet, which since his illness had been put away in a cupboard. He rose painfully, and, leaning heavily upon his stick, hobbled with great difficulty across the room. After taking out the cornet, he hobbled back again to his chair, raised the instrument to his lips, and played a military march.

'Surely they must have heard it?' said Jean to himself, after playing for ten minutes. 'They will come to me.'

He was not disappointed. Several men answered the call of the cornet, and came to see what it meant.

Gasping for breath after his unusual exertion, the old ringer explained matters, telling his friends how anxious he was about his son.

'We will go to the church and fetch him,' said two of the men.

They went quickly down the hill. At its foot they got into a boat and rowed towards the old building. With a torch to give them light, they took their boat right into the porch, and looked about carefully on every side.

'There is nobody here,' said one.

'Nobody,' said the other. 'He may have been drowned.'

'Oh, do not say that! It would be the death of poor old Machut!'

'Well, there is no one——'

'Yes! yes! there *is* some one!' interrupted a clear young voice from above.

The astonished mountaineers looked up, and saw the two little figures peeping from their lofty perch, where they looked like two spiders in the midst of a web. Before the men had recovered from their surprise, André once more took the little girl on his shoulders, and slid down the rope into the boat.

Jean Machut wept as he embraced his plucky son, but his tears were tears of joy. He shed more of the same pleasant kind a few days later when, the flood having subsided, the Prefect himself came to present the red, white, and blue ribbon of honour, the reward of heroism, to the young bell-ringer, André Machut.

EYES THAT SEE:

THE THINGS WE OVERLOOK.

VIII.—BY THE SEA-SHORE.

WHEN I was writing my last article about the stream (see page 211), you will remember I was seated by the sea. Well, as I sat there, I thought in my next I would tell you of some of the interesting things I see on this shore. So here I am again on my boulder, after having strolled along some mile or so of the beach to see what I could find.

I do not propose to tell you of wonderful *rare* things which, no doubt, are on this shore if one looks for them, but I mean to write of just a few ordinary things which are on most shores, but of which the wonder, beauty, or interest are perhaps overlooked.

I have come down to the beach at low tide because I wanted to see what I could find along the sands. The shore here is rather flat, so that I have before me acres of beautiful yellow sand, cut here and there by tiny streams, among them our friend of the last article. Here and there are masses of rock cropping up out of the sand, and close inshore is a wide border, so to speak, of shingle in a series of shelves. Now, I once heard some one tell a friend that these shelves of shingle were put there to prevent the sea coming over on to the parade. She thought *man* had done it! But these shelves are caused by the rough seas and high tides of certain seasons of the year. The stones composing these shelves are all rounded, this being a result of the constant rubbing together they have had possibly

for many years when in the ever-moving sea. The sea will round off the hardest piece of rock, provided it is in it long enough.

Now think of the tide. Have you ever thought why it is the water comes and goes as it does? You must have noticed that the tide comes in and goes out twice in a day and a night. Well, that is not quite correct, because if it did that in twenty-four hours it would always be high tide at the same time, and I am sure you have noticed that the high tide varies in time. Really, it takes nearly twenty-five hours to rise and fall twice; so you see that if the tide is full at two o'clock to-day it will be nearly three o'clock before it is high to-morrow. But you will say, 'Why is this so?' Well, it would be a long task to tell you all about tides here, but I will simply say that the moon is mainly responsible. The moon has a power of attraction just as the earth has (we call it gravitation, so far as it concerns our own activity on the earth), and the moon pulls or attracts the seas a little way towards itself when it is near the earth. No doubt presently you will understand all about this wonderful thing, but at present I just want you to *notice* the difference in time and in the height to which the water rises, for all these little things add interest to a visit to the sea.

Then there are the plants peculiar to the sea-shore. My three favourites are Sea Holly, Horned Poppy, and Thrift, all of which I have found here. In Fig. 1 I show you a piece of Sea Holly. It is rather like a thistle, and the head of flowers is like that of a teazle. The leaves are grey and leathery; they have blue veins and sharp prickles. It is a most attractive plant—but beware of the prickles

Fig. 2 (the Horned Poppy) is quite a rank-growing plant when it 'gets its feet in'; it appears on the higher shingle, and its glorious, almost orange-coloured flowers are a delight. The buds are very quaint, for they are twisted, as though with the fingers and thumb. But the most interesting detail of this plant is its extraordinary seed-vessels. The pistil in the flower is about an inch in length, but after the petals have fallen it grows in length till even ten or twelve inches are reached! The vessels stand in most graceful positions, forming a distinct ornament. This seed-vessel is a sort of pod, containing a great number of seeds, and is as much like the wallflower seed-vessel as any I know. The whole has a grey-green look, for it is covered with a waxy 'bloom.' The only feature I do not like about it is its unpleasant scent, which is very powerful.

Thrift, or Sea-pink (fig. 3), is a tough little plant, which seems to delight in proving how little nourishment it requires, for I find it here in tufts in the cracks of the rocks, high up above the sea. It has sent its roots down into the cracks, and you can only remove it with considerable force. I expect you know the plant, as it is often grown in rock gardens. Its root-stock is tough and woody, its leaves are like slender grass, and its heads of pink or sometimes white flowers are carried on slender stems about six inches in length. Among the flowers are a number of chaffy scales, and the flower-stalk has a scaly sheath, which is arranged in a curious way: it appears as if the flower-stalk had been pushed into the sheath instead of the stalk growing out of the sheath, as on a daffodil or narcissus (see fig. 3).

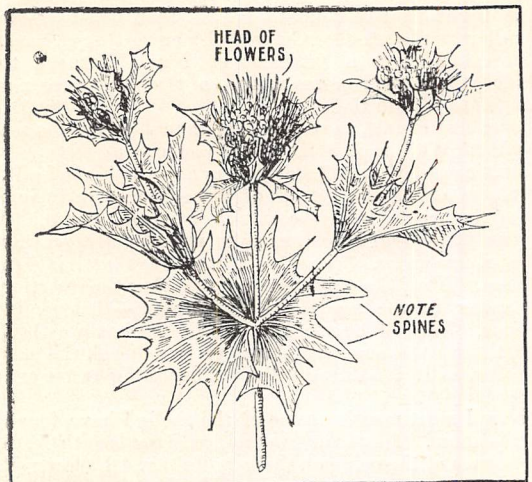
There are many other plants I should like to show you, but I must hurry on now and tell of other things. But I should like you to notice that most plants peculiar to the sea-shore have fleshy or leathery leaves. This condition is a provision of Name Nature's to reduce their need of moisture, so that they are not obliged to take in the salt.

Speaking of salt, have you ever thought why the sea is salt? Well, it is a fact that you can dissolve salt almost as easily in *cold* water as in *hot*—thus, rock-salt, in rivers or at the bottom of the sea, gets dissolved. Then the water, with the salt in solution, eventually arrives at the sea, which has no means of getting away like river water. Thus salt is always arriving in the sea. Now, the only means of reducing the quantity of water in the sea is by evaporation—that is, in vapour. This, of course, happens in the hot weather, but, though the quantity of water is reduced, the salt remains, so it is said that the sea is getting salter and salter!

Now I must mention some of the shells I have found on the shore. Have you ever noticed how beautiful are the shapes of the common shells? In fig. 4 I show you some details of the cockle-shell. Notice the beautiful way all the ribs meet and curl over at the hinge. See, too, the other markings—examine them with a lens, and they will astonish you! You know this fish has two shells exactly alike (A), and is thus called a bivalve (or two-leaf). The mussel is another bivalve, and so is the oyster, though one of his shells is flatter than the other. Then there is the limpet-shell (fig. 5): this is a univalve (one-leaf), for it only has one shell. It is a simple-looking fellow, but I read the other day that it has one hundred and sixty rows of teeth, making one thousand nine hundred and twenty in all! It sounds quite a fearsome beast! Did you ever try to take a limpet off his home on a rock? He sticks like anything—in fact, you know, there is a saying, 'Sticks like a limpet.' The shell is quite smooth, but prettily marked. I always think that the steel helmets worn by our soldiers at the Front are like very large limpet-shells. Other common univalves are periwinkles and whelks. I have not found either this morning, but an interesting point about the periwinkle occurs to me. (I show you one in fig. 6.) You see those twists? Well, each one represents how much the periwinkle has grown in a year. This also applies to the garden-snail, to which the periwinkle is a first cousin; so if you examine them you can tell how old they are. The one I show, I suppose, is going on for four years of age.

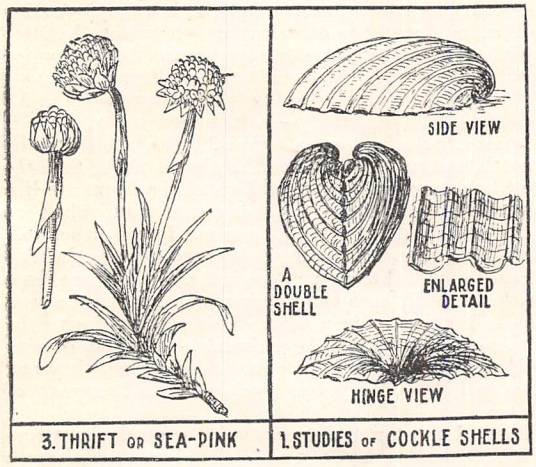
Now, I must not close without a word about sea-weeds. Roughly they can be divided into three classes: red, green, and olive-brown. They look lovely in the water, but when you take them out they seem a hopeless muddle of threads. But here is a way to press and preserve them. When you have collected some pretty pieces, put them in a flat bowl or plate of water; when it spreads out nicely, slip a piece of paper under it, and lift it out gently. You will catch it arranged nicely, and you can press and dry it. When it is dry you can remount it; thus a pretty and interesting collection can be made.

The commonest sea-weed is the Bladder-wrack, which has a strongly-marked vein and little bladders (fig. 7). In fig. 8 I show you a piece of a rather less common form I have just found. It has one large bladder, and from it grow several flat bands, with smaller ones growing at the sides and bladders on the ends. These bladders are full of air to make them float.



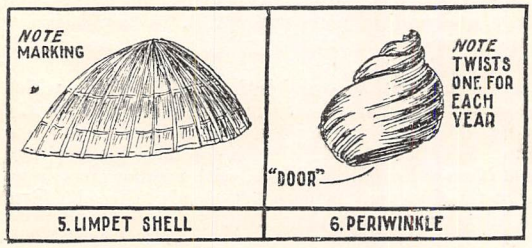
1. SPRAY OF SEA HOLLY

Now I fear I must stop, though I have not mentioned the sea-birds nor lots of other things! The sea-gulls are circling now over the incoming tide, dropping from time

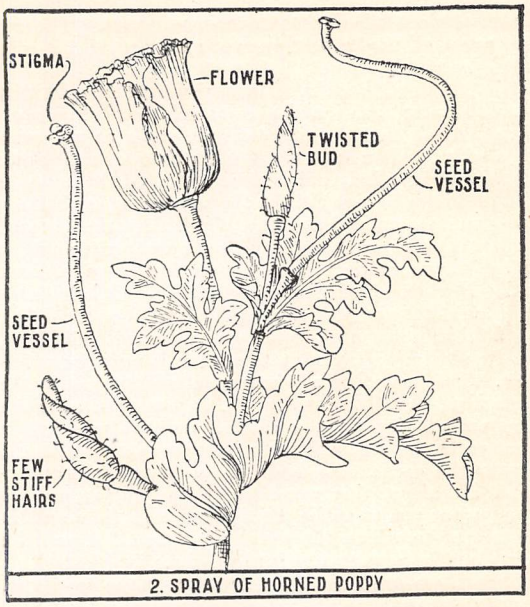


3. THRIFT OR SEA-PINK | 4. STUDIES OF COCKLE SHELLS

to time, and gracefully floating on the sea. I feel I must just mention them, for they have been calling their characteristic 'Mew, mew-w!' as though asking me not to forget them.



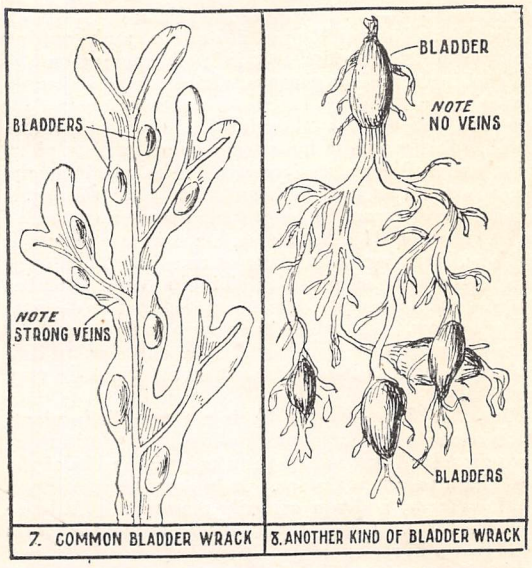
5. LIMPET SHELL | 6. PERIWINKLE



2. SPRAY OF HORNED POPPY

Now, when next you go to the sea just try to remember some of the things I have told you, and look out to see them for yourselves, and find others!

E. M. Barlow.



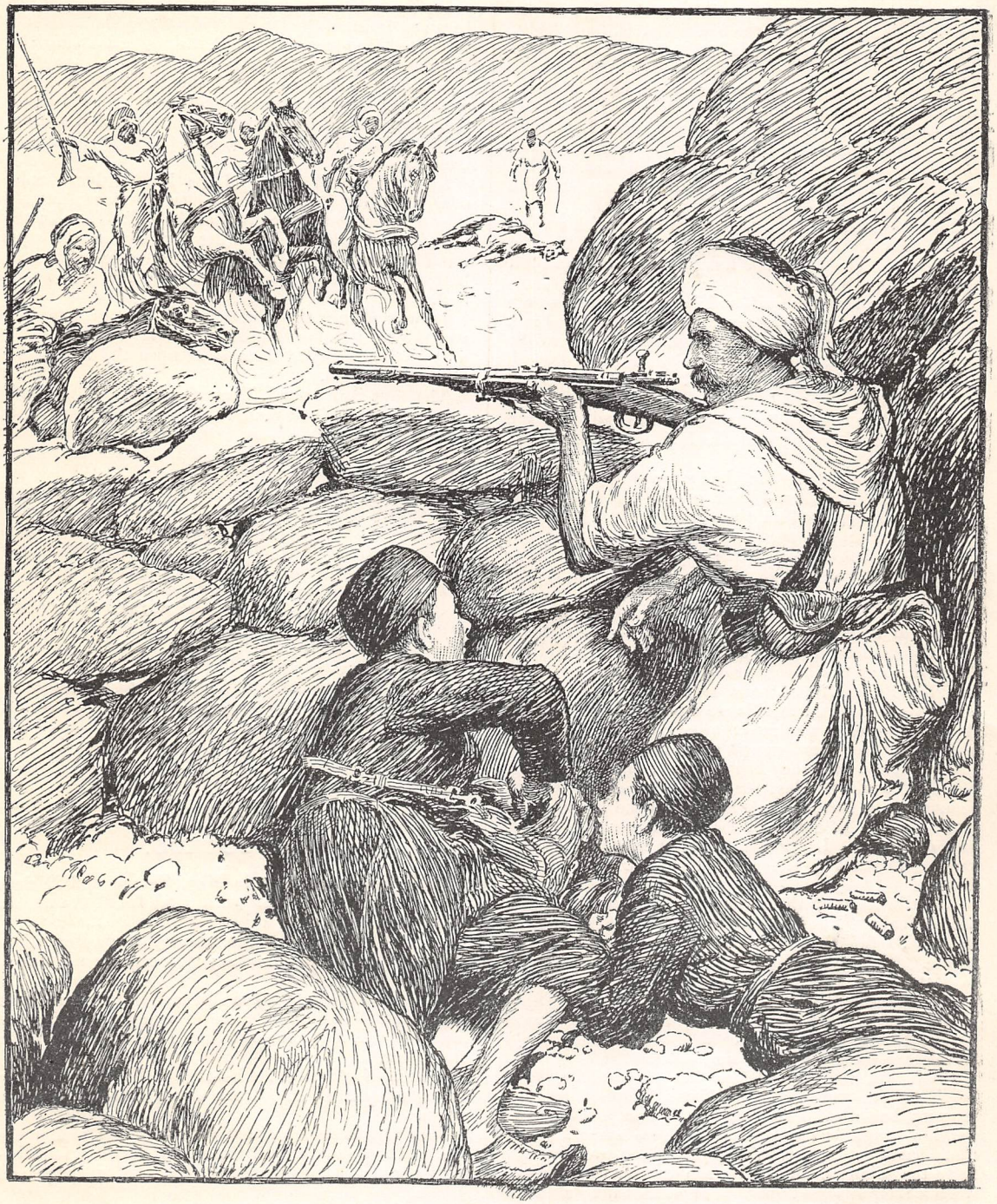
7. COMMON BLADDER WRACK | 8. ANOTHER KIND OF BLADDER WRACK

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 246.)

WITH a muffled oath, Langridge urged on the donkeys down the bank to the river's edge. The beasts shivered nervously and snuffed at the water; plainly it would be no easy task to make them cross,



"'Hand me the cartridges as I want them.'"

even if crossing were possible at any point except the ford of which Langridge had spoken. It was only too evident that the strong current would be a serious difficulty.

The little party was partially sheltered now from either bank of the stream. Their pursuers might believe that they had started to cross the river, only to fall into the ambush on the other side.

They kept, so far as was possible, to the edge of the stream, but now and again the banks shelved too steeply, and they had not only to wade, but to force the donkeys to swim.

Thus they struggled on for perhaps a mile or more, and were beginning to hope that they had outwitted their enemies, when Dick gave a startled cry. Langridge followed his gaze, and there, standing openly on the summit of the further bank was a horseman. He brandished his gun, and they could almost see the triumph on his fierce dark face.

But as he turned to go, Langridge acted with sudden swift decision. Raising his gun, he fired, and his aim was deadly. The horseman flung up his arms, and fell heavily from the saddle.

The stream here ran swift and deep, and a long sweep of level sand skirted the river for a great way ahead. Langridge, without a second's hesitation, unfastened the pack of the second donkey, letting it fall to the ground. 'You must ride, too,' he said to Dick. 'Jump up and hang on as best you can.'

He urged on the two beasts with blows and cries, and they responded bravely, whilst he himself ran behind at the top of his speed.

But the sound of the shot had warned their enemies. Loud shouts were heard from a distance, and half-a-dozen riders appeared on the opposite bank, perhaps a mile further up stream. Even with this start, it was very plain that the little party could scarcely hope to escape, hampered as they were, but at least it was worth trying.

Fortunately, the Moors are bad shots, firing recklessly and at random. When excited, they aim high, and the bullets seldom find their mark. Neither Langridge nor the boys were hit. Half a dozen times Langridge himself knelt and took cool and deliberate aim. He accounted in this way for at least four of their enemies, but already others had joined them, and little was gained except a temporary delay.

For about a mile they kept up this running fight, but plainly it could not last for long. Some rocky broken ground on the further bank had forced the horsemen to make a wide détour, and for the moment they were out of sight. Langridge, gasping now for breath, staggered round a sharp bend and cried aloud in dismay.

Right in front of them the level stretch ended in a perpendicular wall of cliff, stretching out into the river itself. To the right, the hills rose more steeply than before. They were fairly trapped. Langridge came to a standstill and looked about him grimly. 'There's only one chance,' he said. 'I've two guns and plenty of ammunition. If we can keep them at bay until nightfall we might possibly be able to leave the donkeys and escape under cover of the darkness.'

He turned and examined the face of the cliff and the beach below, strewn with boulders. Without losing a moment, he called to the boys to help him, and began to build a rough breastwork of the loose stones, piling them hastily together. They had been working for fully ten minutes, and had made wonderful progress, when a rider appeared upon the opposite bank; a bullet whistled high, and a splash of lead showed on the rock above their heads.

'Lie down, and keep down,' Langridge ordered. 'Don't put up your heads, and hand me the cartridges as I want them. 'That's all you can do.'

He flung himself down behind the breastwork, and began to fire carefully, scarcely wasting a shot. He had accounted for seven at least of their enemies before the Moors adopted fresh tactics.

Suddenly a wild chorus of shouts heralded a new attack. Charging at full gallop round the bend and on their own side of the river came a dozen riders. On they came, yelling like demons, and waving their long muskets above their heads.

Langridge fired first, and the leading horse rolled over, throwing its rider clear into the river; but still they came on to the very foot of the cliff. Here, instead of firing a volley and retiring swiftly, in the usual Arab fashion, they all slipped from their saddles and half their number started to rush the position on foot.

It was plainly their intention to capture Langridge and the boys, rather than kill them out of hand. Soon all twelve had hurled themselves upon the defenders of the little fortress.

The first and second Moors fell back dead or badly wounded, but faster than the Englishman could fire they came on. In a very few moments all three were overwhelmed, bound hand and foot, and cast down roughly on the sand.

In twos and threes other Moors rode down, a rough camp was pitched, and fires were lighted. The prisoners were given food—thin, sodden cakes of bread and sweet, scalding tea; but, although Dick and Sandy ate hungrily, Langridge sat staring in front of him with a look of desperate fear in his eyes.

Plainly he expected little mercy at the hands of their captors, and the manner of a tall, fierce-looking man, who seemed the leader, gave no encouragement for hope.

He strode up to Langridge, and kicked him as he lay helpless and bound. 'So we have caught you at last, Nazarani traitor!' he said. 'Well, there shall be an end at last of your spying!'

(*Continued on page* 258.)

THE CUCKOO.

ONE lovely morning in May, George and Michael strolled out to the woods, and heard the cuckoo calling.

'That's lucky,' said George, who was very superstitious and had many foolish fancies; 'it means a pocketful of money for me.'

'Why you alone?' asked Michael. 'I don't see why the cuckoo should think more of you than he does of me. Indeed, if it comes to that, I have a better claim altogether.'

Instead of enjoying the beauty of the morning they began to quarrel, and from words it soon came to blows.

They fought so hard that each was hurt, and, in the end, had to go and see the doctor. While he was patching them up, they explained the cause of their quarrel to him.

The doctor laughed heartily at them, and said, 'You silly boys! The cuckoo has brought *me* the good fortune, not you, for you have to go home with bruised faces, while I put your money in my pocket.'

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 243.)

JIMMY had thought that his case was safe in the hands of Manning, to whom he felt extraordinarily grateful for taking it up. But he realised now that he would have to fight for himself too, for Manning did not know everything, and he had a very clever and plausible enemy against him. He hardly felt equal to the task, for his pain was increasing, and he was feeling sick and tired. But he pulled himself together, and said, 'No, I don't. He'd put his clock back, and I didn't cheek him in hall.'

'Better take it point by point,' suggested Norris, whose father was a leading barrister, and who had ideas about evidence and cross-examination.

'Why do you say he put his clock back, and what should he do it for?' asked Bertram.

'His clock has always been right,' said Jimmy. 'If I had said I wouldn't go, because there wasn't time, he would have rubbered me; and if I had been late for call, I should have been hauled. He wanted to get at me somehow.'

'Did you put your clock back?' asked Bertram.

'Of course I didn't,' said Williams, easily. 'And all the rest is pure imagination.'

'Will you *swear* you didn't put your clock back?' asked Manning.

'No, I won't,' said Williams as easily as before. 'If my word isn't to be believed, it won't be made so by swearing.'

'I thought you wouldn't,' said Jimmy, incautiously.

Williams motioned towards him with his hand. 'That's the sort of cheek I have to put up with from my fag,' he said. 'On second thoughts, I *will* swear to it. I did *not* put my clock back.'

'I suppose you stopped it, then, for five minutes,' said Jimmy.

Whether this was the explanation of Williams's being willing to swear did not transpire, for Manning said sharply to Jimmy: 'We're looking into this, not you. All you have to do is to answer the questions put to you.' So Williams was not asked to swear that he had not stopped his clock.

But Jimmy held up against Manning's rebuke enough to say, 'He didn't want another slosh-sheet either, because I got him one two days ago.'

'Let's go on to the cheek in hall,' said Norris.

'There's no doubt about that,' said Williams, quickly. 'When I called his name, and he answered, he shouted: "Sucks to you!" or some Lower boy expression of that sort.'

'I didn't,' said Jimmy.

Williams shrugged his shoulders again. 'I heard him plainly enough,' he said, 'and so did everybody else. You can ask anybody who was there. Or I'll swear again, it you like,' he added. 'Perhaps you'd better put me on my oath, and save trouble.'

'You couldn't have heard very plainly, if you don't know exactly what he did say,' said Bertram.

'I do know exactly. It was "Sucks to you!"—an infantile puerility meant to express contempt and disdain.'

'You needn't try to be clever at our expense,' said Manning. 'Do you still say you didn't call out anything, Henshaw?'

'Somebody else did,' said Jimmy, after a moment's hesitation.

'Oh, that was it, was it?' said Williams. 'Well, I thought it was you. I don't see that it makes much difference, though, if he gets somebody else to do what he daren't do himself. He got other Lower boys to jeer at me, going out of hall, by telling them the lie I've already disposed of; and he did call something out after me, something about my clock. The cheek was as patent as could be, and I'd every right to rubber him for it. I shouldn't have been keeping proper order if I hadn't.'

'I asked if I should come up and put his clock right?' said Jimmy.

'That was part of the cheek I rubbered him for,' said Williams.

'I think we must say that Henshaw cheeked a Prefect at Call-over,' said Bertram, judicially. 'Whether there wasn't some excuse for him everybody can decide for themselves. It doesn't much matter, as he was rubbered for it, and there'd have been no cause for complaint if he'd been rubbered in the ordinary way.'

'I think it does matter,' said Manning, 'if Williams just laid a trap for him to give him an excuse for rubbering him anyhow. It would be part of the mean system of bullying that only Williams, out of the whole school, goes in for. But we'll drop that for the moment. Now comes the question of how the rubbering was done. I want to see the shoe it was done with.'

'Why not all pay a visit to my room and reconstruct the scene?' suggested Williams. 'It's often done in a criminal trial.'

'I want to see the shoe,' said Manning. 'Will you fetch it, or shall we call a fag!'

'Better call a fag,' said Williams; and this was done, the fag who presented himself being Mayfield, to whom Williams gave instructions as to where the shoe was to be found, with the utmost coolness.

While he was away, Norris said: 'Williams told us that Henshaw kicked and bit and scratched him.'

'I didn't,' said Jimmy, 'except kicking. I did try to fight, but I didn't bite or scratch.'

'Have you got any marks to show, Williams?' asked Manning.

Williams was dispensed from answering by the return of Mayfield with the shoe.

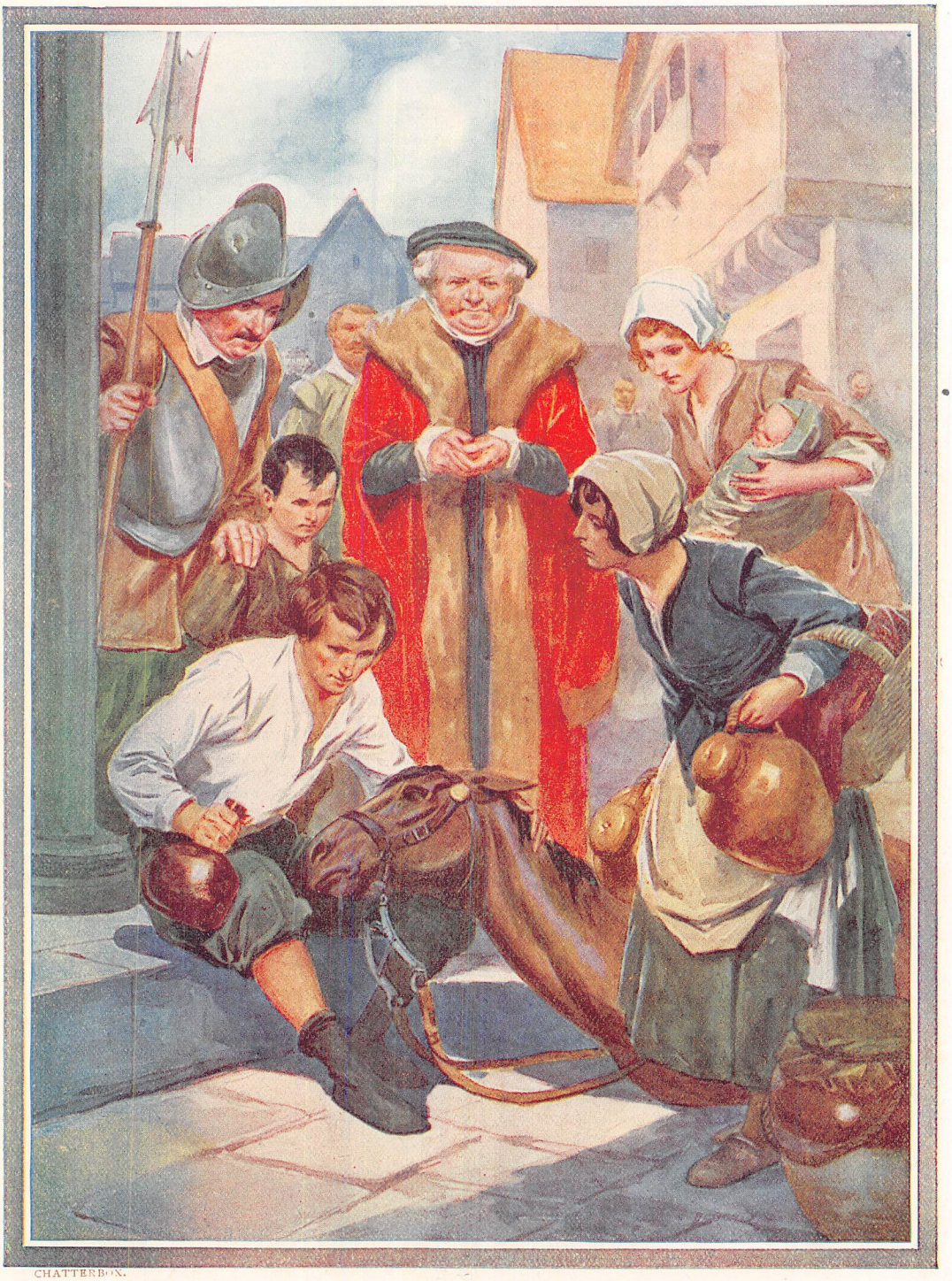
'That's a pretty sort of thing to use for a slipper!' said Manning, as Bertram held the shoe in his hand. It was the heaviest kind of buckskin shoe with a thick rubber sole.

'If he hadn't struggled,' said Williams, dropping the charge of biting and scratching, 'it wouldn't have hurt him more than a slipper. It didn't hurt him much, except for the scratch on his face.' But his own face wore a flush for the first time, and the shoe itself, which Bertram turned over in his hand, was sufficient comment on his speech.

A still more effective comment was the fact that at this point Jimmy, who had been feeling more and more tired and hurt, fell off his chair in a dead faint.

(*Continued on page* 262.)

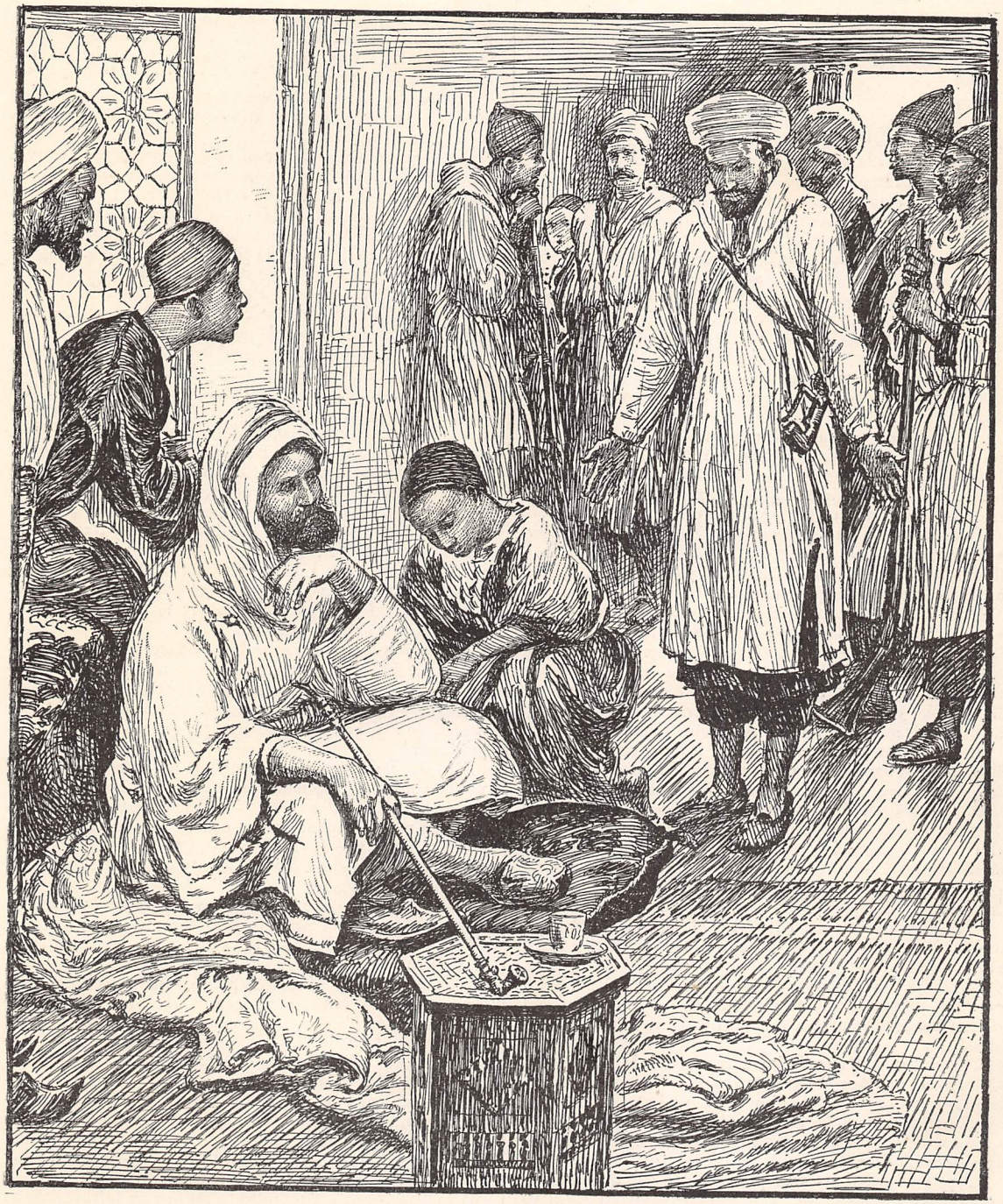
"'That's a pretty sort of thing to use for a slipper!' said Manning."



CHATTERBOX.

BRAVE ROLAND.

("*How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix*," by ROBERT BROWNING.)



"'We have brought prisoners taken yesterday on the river-banks, Lord Mulai Hafid.'"

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 254.)

CHAPTER XIII.

ALTHOUGH Dick and Sandy only understood very imperfectly the words of the Moor, his fierce expression and actions told them very plainly the danger which Langridge, and probably they themselves, ran. Miserable in body and mind they spent a wretched night, and were glad enough when at dawn there was a general move in the camp.

Before starting the two boys were released from the cords which bound them, and ordered to mount on Langridge's donkeys. As for the Englishman himself, he was treated far more roughly. The bonds were removed from his legs, but his wrists were tied behind him, and a cord secured them to the stirrup-leather of one of the Moorish soldiers. The unfortunate man was obliged to run in order to keep up with the horses, and if he flagged or stumbled, blows from his captors urged him on. Langridge submitted unprotestingly; indeed, it was very plain that words would not help him. Evidently these Moors of Mulai Hafid's army were very much incensed against their prisoner, and ready to treat him more than roughly if he resisted.

Towards noon the party came in sight of a shallow basin amongst the foothills, and this wide hollow was filled from side to side with tents, picketed horses, and all the baggage of a great camp.

Here and there groups of soldiers cooked their midday meal round little fires or braziers. Many of them hastened forward to meet the new-comers, questioning the leader eagerly. And all alike showed fierce triumph at sight of Langridge, pressing closely around him, shaking their clenched fists in his face and hurling at him the most opprobrious Arabic epithets.

It looked for a few moments as though the prisoner's life were in imminent danger, and the expression on his white face and in his despairing eyes told the boys that he expected little mercy from these fierce soldiers. But his guards had plainly been instructed to deliver up the Englishman alive. They pushed back the crowd with their rifle-butts, and made their way towards a group of whitewashed buildings in the midst of the hollow.

'It's like a castle, isn't it, Dick?' whispered Sandy; and, indeed, the building, with its extraordinarily thick walls and low tower, seemed built for defence. Indeed, such buildings are necessary still in this wild country, where bands of brigands range to and fro and do not hesitate to attack peaceful and inoffensive homesteads.

The outer walls enclosed a courtyard, in the middle of which another building stood. The horses and donkeys were left at the gate, and half-a-dozen soldiers led Langridge and the boys into a low, dusky room, where mats were spread here and there upon the beaten earth floor.

A pile of cushions was placed in the middle of the room, and on this sat a man dressed from head to foot in pure white. He was handsome and olive-skinned, with a black beard and extremely dark and observant eyes. He sat resting his chin on his palm, whilst with the other hand he fingered a long-stemmed pipe, with a tiny bowl, which lay upon the inlaid stool beside him.

This man glanced up as the prisoners entered, and the guards saluted him reverently. Dick and Sandy noticed that he alone was seated, although some half-dozen other men were present in the room.

'Who are these?' the seated man said, and his voice was so slow and clear that the boys were able to understand almost all that he said.

The leader of the Moorish soldiers answered respectfully: 'We have brought prisoners taken yesterday on the river-banks, Lord Mulai Hafid. The two lads are naught—only Jewish dogs. But as for the man, he is that Nazarani who has so much injured your cause by reason of his spying for the Sultan Abdul Aziz.'

'Ah! say you so?' The man, whom Dick and Sandy now understood to be the Pretender, Mulai Hafid, leant forward with interest. 'You have done well—very well. Let him approach.'

The Moorish captain saluted with a look of fierce satisfaction, and pushed Langridge forward. The Englishman was a pitiful sight, so exhausted with the long march that he could scarcely stand. His hair hung down over his face, which was covered with dust and blood and the marks of bruises, and his clothes, also, were torn and blood-stained. But, in spite of all, he held himself resolutely enough, and answered Mulai Hafid's questions clearly and steadily.

'Why have you dared to plot against me, Nazarani?' the Moorish leader asked.

'It is true that I have fought for the Sultan, your brother,' Langridge answered. 'I am his soldier, and I have fallen into your hands. It is as a prisoner of war that you should treat me.'

'Nay, not as an honourable prisoner, but as a spy,' Mulai Hafid said, sternly. 'Have you not feigned to be of my party?—have you not by that means stolen our secrets? And have you not afterwards sold those secrets to my brother, the usurper—traitor and spy as you are?'

'I am no traitor,' Langridge answered, but Dick noticed that his face had grown even whiter than before beneath the blood and dust which covered it, and he glanced round like an animal caught in a trap.

'But I say you are!' the Moor cried, fiercely. 'And as a traitor you shall die! Have you ought to plead in your own defence?'

'I have this to say,' Langridge answered. 'I am an Englishman. You must answer for my life to Britain. My King will not suffer his subjects to be killed thus. He will revenge me.'

'Who will tell him of it?' A cruel, mocking smile crossed Mulai Hafid's dark face. 'Moreover, having cast in your lot with our land, you can no more claim the protection of England. Have you more to say?'

Langridge was silent, and Mulai Hafid made a gesture to the guards. 'Take him out and hang him at once; there is no need for delay,' he said briefly.

A terrible change passed over the man's face as he heard his sentence. He began to speak quickly and imploringly: 'No!—wait, Lord . . . I have more to say. You shall hear me! Listen, oh, Mulai Hafid. If you will spare my life I promise to serve you faithfully—to tell you all the secrets of the Sultan Abdul Aziz, all the plans of his army . . . I swear to you that I know much—enough, it may be, to help you to the throne.'

(*Continued on page* 271.)

MY KINGDOM.

ALL you who would my Kingdom see,
Must come and mount the stairs with me,
And then at last you'll safely stand
In my small realm of Nursery Land.

'Tis here I reign and rule alone,
The sofa-cushion is my throne;
All day I sit and make my laws,
And judge my faithful people's cause.

Two leaden soldiers pace the floor,
And stand as sentries by the door,
And when a step comes on the stair
They give the challenge, 'Who goes there?'

When any foes my realm invade,
I put the chairs as barricade;
And then I bid my subjects come
To fight for King, and land, and home.

If every King would reign like me,
All people would be brave and free;
And every throne secure would stand,
And happy as my Nursery Land.

FRANK ELLIS.

A JOURNEY TO GO.

II.—TO THE PORT OF THE WEST.

TO the West—that is to be the direction of our first journey; so, leaving our starting-point in the City of London behind us, we will make our way as did the stage-coaches of the seventeenth century. 'Through Cheapside, Ludgate Street, Fleet Street, the Hay Market, and Piccadilly.' There, however, we leave the old highway behind us for a time, and, turning northward, reach Paddington Station, the gateway to the West, where gaily-coloured advertisements of an Italy-shaped Cornwall and the palm-trees of Penzance prepare the traveller for the delights that are in store for him.

The Great Western terminus is itself almost on the outskirts of London, so we are carried quickly out of the fog and smoke and suburbs into a flowery land, where in spring and summer-time the trial grounds of seed merchants, with their brilliant and variegated blossoms, give us a cheery and vivid foretaste of the real country.

Slough is one of the first stations that we pass after leaving London, and then we all crowd to the left-hand window and strain our eyes to where, crowning the summit of a distant hill, the familiar outline of a great building may be seen.

It is Windsor Castle. We recognise at a glance the Round Tower, with its floating Standard, and the high roof of St. George's Chapel; and there are few buildings in England, or, indeed, in the whole world, that are so full of wonderful historical memories. They flit through our minds as the train rushes by, like the swiftly changing pictures of a cinema film.

We see the first castle on the hill, where Harold lived in the dark early days of English history, and later there is the Norman keep built by his successor, William the Conqueror. Later King John rides out from the tower which still bears his name to meet his angry and resolute barons on the green field of Runnymede; and then we have a pretty picture in which James of Scotland, one of Windsor's many Royal captives, appears looking out from his prison window, and seeing among the close-set hawthorns and junipers of the garden below his future wife, the golden-haired Jane Beaufort, in her rich dress and with a red, heart-shaped ruby gleaming at her white throat.

The scene changes: and now we have the sad end instead of the beginning of a love story, for here at the Deanery door is King Richard II. bidding farewell to his child-bride, Isobel of France.

'I never saw so great a lord make so much of or show such affection to a lady,' says Froissart, describing the scene in his quaint, vivid words; and then Richard leaves his eleven-year-old queen and goes away to disaster and death.

Two hundred years later we have another English king dethroned and murdered, and, on a snowy winter day, the faithful followers of Charles I. bring the body of their beloved master to its tomb in St. George's Chapel, where the banners of the Garter knights hang above their stalls.

Another two centuries and more, another winter day, and another English monarch is laid to rest; but this funeral is a very different ceremony to the hurried burial of the Martyr King, for the whole nation mourns the death of Queen Victoria. Her son and grandson, Edward VII. of England and William II. of Germany, both descendants of the Royal Stuarts and both knights of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, follow her coffin into St. George's Chapel. Times have changed since that chilly February day in 1901; but the old castle still keeps guard on its hill, and the Royal Standard still waves above it, with the Irish harp, the Scotch lion and the leopards of Cœur de Lion intact.

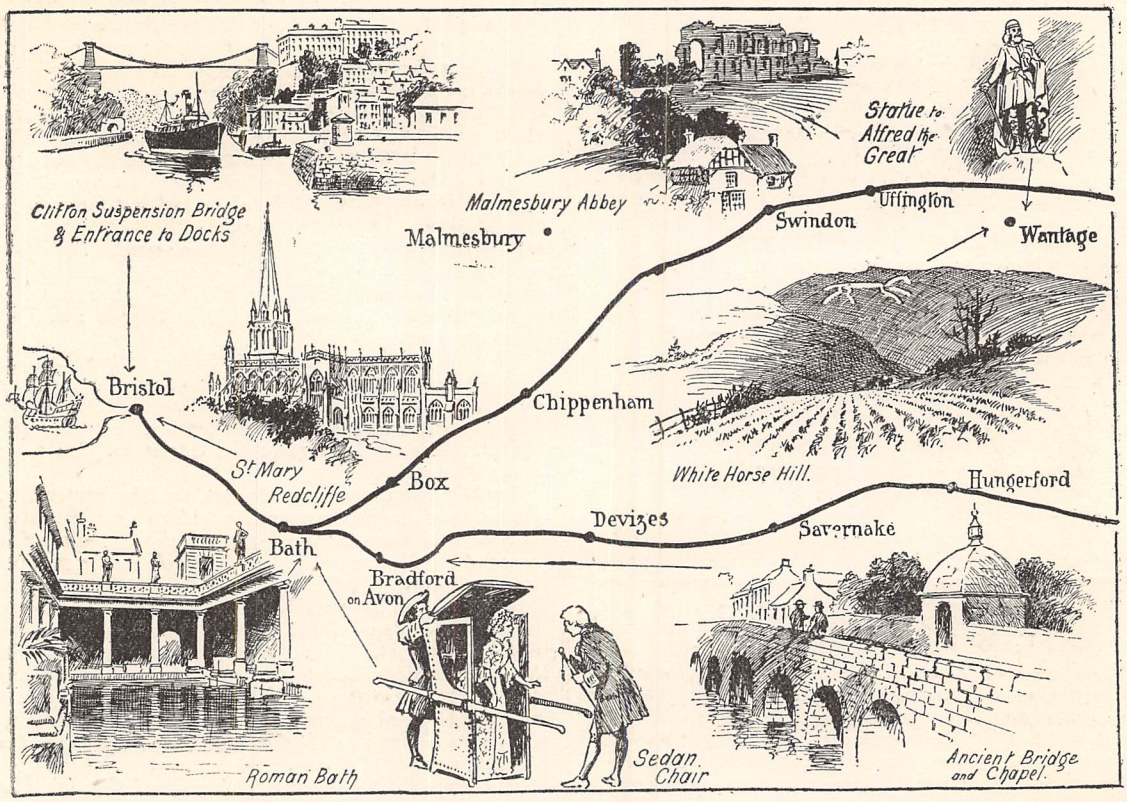
We leave Windsor now and go on, through the Thames Valley, until we come to Maidenhead, a river-side town that, legend tells us, gained its pretty name because the head of one of St. Ursula's ten thousand martyred virgins was presented to the church as a relic.

So much for romance; history and common-sense give the word a more prosaic derivation, and declare that the name of the town should not be Maidenhead at all, but Middle Hythe, or middle wharf.

There was here, formerly, an old wooden bridge over the Thames, and three oak-trees for its repair was given every year from the forest of Windsor. On this bridge a fierce battle took place between the armies of Henry VI. and Richard II.

At Maidenhead, during the Civil Wars, King Charles was once allowed to meet his three children, Princess Elizabeth, the Duke of York, and the little Duke of Gloucester, after a long separation. The people of the riverside town made the occasion a festivity, and on that bright July day the houses were decked with green boughs and flowers were scattered in the streets; but the rejoicings did not last for long, and, after a few days, Charles had to bid his children farewell once more.

The whole of this part of England is full of memories of the troubled times of the great Rebellion, and we can trace the story of the unfortunate king back from the snow-covered bier at Windsor through the pathetic merry-making of Maidenhead, to Reading and Newbury, where great battles were fought between the Royalists and Roundheads. Reading is connected in our minds to-day chiefly with biscuits, and, as we are carried through the town in a railway train, we see little to



The Road to Bristol—Western Section.

remind us of its past greatness. Factories, tall chimneys and streets of commonplace red-brick houses, that is all; but, as is the case with many other cities both at home and abroad, the modern aspect of Reading is in reality only a proof of its age and adventures. Assaults, riots, battles, and sieges, these have all been included in the history of Reading, and but few traces now remain of its ancient buildings and of the great Abbey for which it was once famous.

Long ago, however, in the time of the Plantagenet kings, Reading was one of the most important towns in England, and here parliaments, councils, and great councils took place. Heraclius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, here presented Henry I. with the keys of the Holy Sepulchre, and urged him to embark on a crusade. Queen Elizabeth visited the town in state during one of her progresses through the west country, and, in 1643, the place was besieged and captured by the Parliamentarian army under the Earl of Essex.

At Reading the Great Western Railway divides into two branches, which run to Bath by different routes. We will first follow the southern line, and go to Newbury, where two battles were fought within the space of a few months.

The first of these took place soon after the siege of Reading, on a cold autumn day, and we read that the reckless Cavalier officers were so eager for the fray that, instead of waiting to don their doublets, they attacked the enemy clad only in their shirts. The fight was a terrible one, and ended in the defeat of Prince Rupert and his troops. That night no less than sixty carts brought the bodies of those slain in the battle, among whom was the brave Royalist, Lord Falkland, into the town.

Beyond Newbury we are carried through Savernake, where once was a great forest, to Devizes, the Castrum Divisarium of Roman times.

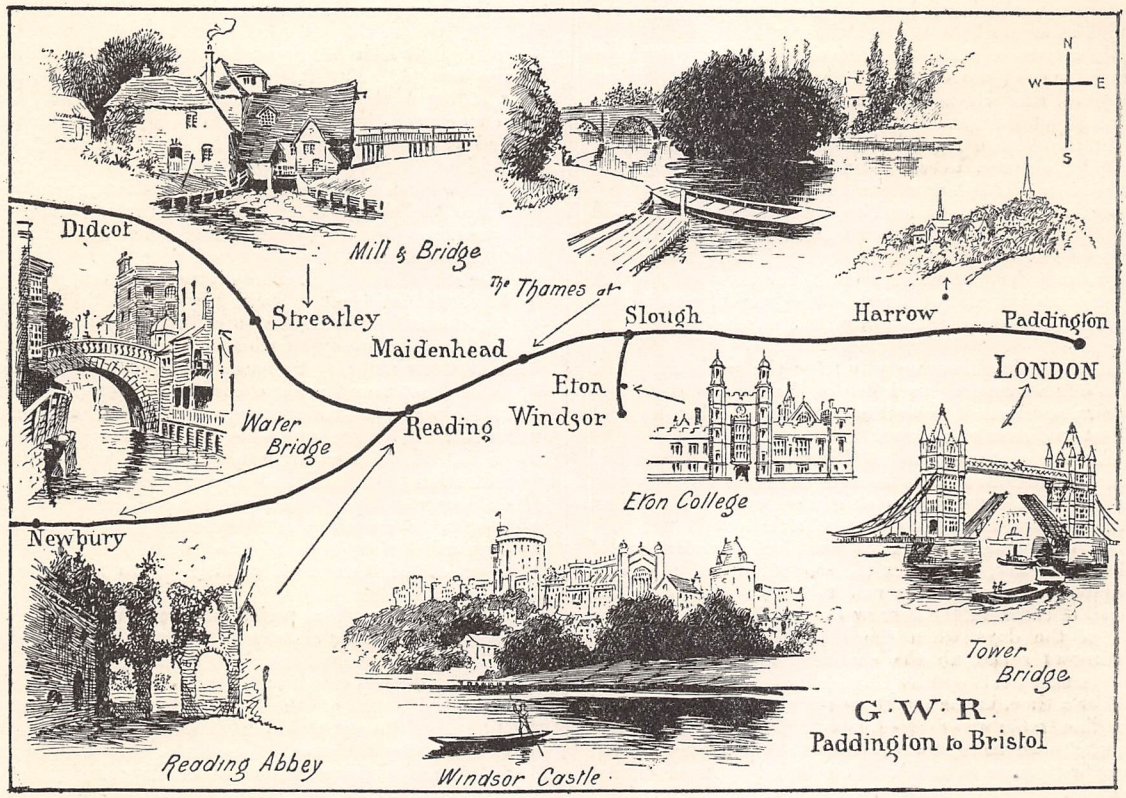
This place, too, was the scene of a battle in the Great Rebellion, but now the fortune of war had changed, and it was Sir William Waller, the Roundhead, whose troops were put to flight by an inferior Royalist force on Roundway Hill, above the town.

Not long after passing through Devizes we come to Bradford-on-Avon, where there is an old bridge with a very curious gatehouse, and a wonderfully complete Saxon church.

We go back now to the main line of the Great Western Railway, and putting aside memories of the Civil War for a time, come to other battlefields and the scene of an older struggle.

Uffington, or Uffa's town, carries us back into Saxon days, and all through the Vale of the White Horse can be seen traces of the Roman occupation of Britain and of the fierce wars against the heathen Danes.

It was long thought that the white horse carved into the chalk of the down, which can be seen from the railway (on the right hand, going west), was a memorial of the great victory won by King Alfred on Ashdown,



The Road to Bristol—Eastern Section.

when, as old writers say, 'He had possession of the place of Carnage,' but it is now believed that the strange, uncouth figure was cut long before Saxon times—in the dim, prehistoric days when the Ancient Britons marched along the Ridgeway near at hand and set up their mysterious circles of stones at Avebury and on Salisbury Plain.

There is an interesting description of the White Horse Valley and of its wonders at the beginning of *Tom Brown's Schooldays;* and we read there, too, of the Giant's Staircase, and of the Dragon's Hill, where, legend tells us, St. George, the patron saint of England, slew the dragon.

We leave the valley of the White Horse, and following the footsteps of King Alfred westward, reach Chippenham, an old market-town where once he held his Court. The name of the place is derived from the Saxon word 'Ceapen,' meaning to buy, and reminds us of Cheapside, which we passed through at the beginning of our journey.

After Chippenham we soon come to Box, where our train burrows under the hill that the Roman fosseway climbed so sturdily, and then Bath is reached, a town which is supposed to have been founded by the British king, Bladud, and which certainly was a flourishing place, with baths, villas, and temples, in the days of the Roman occupation.

Bath has seen good and evil days during its long history, and a great battle was fought on Lansdowne Hill in 1643, when the Royalists defeated Waller, and their leader, Lord Hertford, entered the town in triumph. However, the period of greatest prosperity and importance was in the eighteenth century, for then the West-country Spa became one of the chief centres of English fashionable life.

Those were gay days indeed, and we can picture the narrow, winding streets thronged with coaches and sedan chairs, while Beau Nash, in his chariot drawn by eight grey steeds, drove to the Assembly Rooms, where he dictated to duchesses, and ruled the proudest ladies and gentlemen of London society with a rod of iron.

Bath is haunted by many ghosts from the past, and we meet there the heroes and heroines of fiction as well as of fact. Jane Austen loved the place, and we seem to see romantic Catherine Morland dancing with Mr. Tilney in the Upper Rooms, and Ann Elliot caught in the rain in Milsom Street and escorted from the White Hart to Camden Place by her shy lover, Captain Wentworth. Mr. Pickwick also had famous adventures there.

Not far from Bath, on the way to Bristol, is Keynsham, on the Avon, where legend tells us the British princess, Keyna, founded a nunnery and was haunted by legions of vipers, which, in answer to her prayers, were all turned into stone. And then, with road, railway, and river running side by side, we come to the chief town of the West of England.

Bristol, or Bristowe, as it used to be called, seems a grey, commonplace city enough as we enter its dingy

eastern suburbs, but it has a long and romantic history, which stretches back through the centuries to the days when it was a little Scandinavian colony, to whose quays trading-ships brought cargoes of Anglo-Saxon captives, and whose slave-market came to be famous throughout Europe.

In the Middle Ages Bristowe was a walled city, a frontier outpost, ever on its guard against the wild tribesmen of Wales, whose strongholds were not far away, across the Severn Sea, and remains of the old fortifications are still to be seen. Froissart, in his *Chronicles*, describes Bristol graphically, although apparently he had never seen it, for he speaks of 'A good town and a strong, well closed, standing on a good port of the sea, and a strong castle, the sea beating round it.'

Really Bristol is some way from the sea, although it was a famous port, the home of the Merchant Adventurers, and from it Sebastian Cabot sailed when he went West to discover America.

As the centuries passed, Bristol became larger and more important, and, as became the most westerly port in England, its trade was chiefly with the West Indies, America, and the West Coast of Africa.

Chocolate and tobacco, the two chief manufactures of Bristol to-day, reflect its old character, and the great red buildings where the raw tobacco is stored, or the smell of cocoa in the narrow streets of the city, remind us of the days when the little sailing-ships of the venturers sailed up the channel and anchored at the quays near St. Stephen's Church.

For a time, in the eighteenth century, an ancient and terrible traffic was revived, and Bristol became a slave-market once more, for that was the time when cotton was first grown in the British colonies of America, and many a cargo of negroes was brought from New Guinea and the Gold Coast, to be re-shipped at Bristol for the plantations of Virginia. There are still dark cellars in the city with iron rings in the walls to which the miserable slaves were fastened.

Not far away from these gloomy prisons, and visible from the railway as we pass through Bristol, rises the graceful spire of St. Mary Redcliffe, which Queen Elizabeth described as 'the fairest, goodliest, and most famous parish church in all England.'

A. A. Methley, F.R.G.S.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 253.)

CHAPTER XII.

JIMMY was not seriously hurt, and a day in bed set him right again, though his bruises remained a mute witness against Williams for some time afterwards. His fainting, however, at that particular moment made a deep impression not only upon the Prefects, who saw him fall off his chair, but upon the whole House, and, as the news spread the next day, upon the whole school. Bullying is no longer regarded as a natural thing amongst boys at a Public School. It has come to be seen as what it is, a thoroughly unsportsmanlike oppression of the weak by the strong, which may include downright cruelty if the oppressor has a taste that way, as Williams undoubtedly had. Sympathy on Jimmy's behalf was strong, especially when the trick by which Williams had tried to entrap him became known. For it was universally believed, in spite of his denial, that he had altered his clock in some way, and it was an extra offence against him that he had rubbered Jimmy after his trap had failed to catch him.

There was no need to continue the Prefects' examination into the charge of systematic bullying. Jimmy's collapse was taken to prove the case, and it was decided that Williams must do without a fag for the rest of the time he stayed at school. The decision was very galling to him, and still more galling was the decline of his influence in the House and in the school. He might have had everything his own way. He was in both Elevens, and clever enough to be high up in the Sixth, without ever having earned the reputation of a sap. He was good-looking and well-dressed, and could make himself a very agreeable companion if he cared to do so. But his nature caused him to wish to be feared rather than liked, and he had overshot the mark. His chances of being liked were certainly at an end as long as he remained at Whyborough, and after he had earned the disgrace at the hands of his fellow-Prefects of being deprived of his right to fag, nobody feared him.

He went through a period of great unpopularity. There was something sinister behind the whole affair, something that revolted the clean instincts of boyhood, in the way he had acted, and, because the examination had stopped short at the point where his previous treatment of Jimmy would have come out, all sorts of rumours passed through the school. He seemed to have had an uncanny power of making his cruelty felt without ever doing anything physically cruel. The brutal rubbering would have been forgiven him much sooner but for this, for that was bullying of a sort that could be understood, and had already been punished. The senior boys did not care to be seen in his company, the juniors showed their disapproval of him in various ways that must have been hard for him to bear. But he took no notice of anything, and by-and-by the feeling began to die down.

When Jimmy came out of sick-room and took his place again in Lower Fourth, he found himself for a short time a popular hero. If he had been a 'rotter' this might have done him considerable harm, for he would have accepted an artificial popularity that was not based upon anything specially praiseworthy that he had done. But his spirit was scored by what he had gone through at Williams's hands. He wanted to forget it. He was tremendously relieved at not having to fag for him any longer, and pleased that people seemed to like him better than they had before. But he refused to talk about Williams, and showed impatience when he was questioned as to what he had said and done to him. This gained him respect, and the reputation he had suffered under of being a 'cocky young ass' largely disappeared.

It was this behaviour on Jimmy's part that at last gained him the friendship of Henderson, which became such a great thing in his life at Whyborough afterwards.

Henderson asked him to go for a walk with him. The frost, that had seemed to have set in, had disappeared just when skating had seemed to be coming; but now it

had returned to such an extent that the ground was too hard for football. For the second time Jimmy set out for Farstead Broad, and this time there were a good many other boys on the road. But Henderson and he kept apart from them, and had an opportunity of knowing each other better than before in the two hours that they spent together.

After they had talked for a bit about various matters that any two boys in the same House and the same Form might have discussed, Henderson said: 'I've been rather glad that you've kept quiet about Williams. It's what I should have done myself. He can't do you any more harm now, and it's just as well to forget all about it.'

'Why?' asked Jimmy.

'Oh—well, because it's a beastly sort of thing to remember.'

'Yes, that's it,' said Jimmy. 'I did tell Pills some of the things he had said to me, but I rather wish I hadn't.'

'You mean about your mater and sister?'

'Yes. It's all over the place.'

'Well, I asked Pills about that, and he said he hadn't told anybody. Pills doesn't think much, but he can't help being a decent sort, and he said of course he shouldn't have said anything about that to anybody.'

'I've been rather sick with him,' said Jimmy, after a short pause. 'Don't you think he might have let it out without meaning to? Everybody knows it.'

'He said he hadn't,' said Henderson; 'and if anybody asked him he shut them up. As everybody does know about it, it must been either Williams or the Conqueror who has let it out. Pills says that. It can't have been Williams, so it must have been the Conqueror.'

This was news to Jimmy, and unpleasant news. It fitted in with something else that was happening. 'Somehow, I hadn't thought of him,' he said. 'I suppose it's the same about the Ringdove, too?'

'What has the Ringdove got to do with it?' asked Henderson.

'You've heard Weaver and other fellows talk about him—Johnny—so that he could hear?'

'Well, his name is John.'

'Old Mrs. Ringrose calls him Johnny. He will think I told the fellows that. She's an awfully nice old lady, and he was decent to me, too, when I went to tea there. He will think I'm an awful cad.'

'Well, but if you haven't told anybody she called him Johnny!—I don't see what you mean, quite.'

Jimmy began again. 'I hadn't meant to say anything about it, but I don't mind telling *you*. You know what that beast Williams said about my mater—about her going out to service, and all that? Well, Mrs. Ringrose was matron at the School House when Mr. Spedding was here. I suppose it's all right being a matron; but they say now it's natural I should be friends with the Ringroses because of that.'

He did not have to express himself more clearly. Henderson understood that what was being said was that Mrs. Ringrose and Jimmy's mother were not like the 'people' of the other boys and masters at Whyborough.

'Who says it?' he asked.

'It's all about. People don't bring it up against me exactly, because they think it was caddish of Williams to rag me about it. They sort of make me think it doesn't matter. Haven't you heard about it yourself?'

Henderson did not reply immediately. He had heard about it. In fact, he believed that Jimmy's mother had been a matron at a school herself, so circumstantial do rumours become when they are passed from one to another. He didn't think it mattered. She must be a lady for Jimmy to be what he was.

'My father was a Captain in the Royal Horse Artillery,' said Jimmy proudly, as Henderson didn't speak. 'He was killed in South Africa, and I only just remember him. My mater is Irish. My grandfather is Sir Patrick Neame. She told me she was very young when she was married, and she is young now. She was never a matron at a school, or anything of that sort. She has often told me my grandfather is poor, though he lives in a big place in Ireland, and is a General besides being a baronet. And we're poor, too. I told Williams that when I thought he was friendly, and about our cottage in the New Forest, and about my sister and everything. I didn't think he just wanted to find out things so as to bring them up against me, or I wouldn't have told him anything. And I didn't mean we were poor so as to—as to not be like other people. He's made all that up.'

'Yes, he and the Conqueror between them,' said Henderson. 'They are very thick together just now. The Conqueror is about the only fellow that sticks to him, and I dare say it's true that they are trying to work up trouble. I suppose you don't mind my telling other people what you've told me?'

'They'll think I'm trying to swank,' said Jimmy.

'No they won't. It's a scuggy thing to swank about your relations, as some people do. But if they're rather important, as yours are, you don't want it said that they are not like other fellows' people. I'm glad you told me that, Henshaw. About the Ringdove I don't quite know. You were rather an ass to say as much as you did. What I felt was that if the chaps who want to do some work stopped the ones who want to rag from making too much row, the Ringdove would get as much show as he deserves. After all, he's the limit in not being able to keep order, and he'd let down any form he took. Whyborough isn't a sentimental girls' school. The line you and Pills took—that we ought to make a sort of household pet of him—chiefly because he's a fool—isn't going to work. It *hasn't* worked, you know.'

'No, I know,' said Jimmy. 'I can see it now. 'Still, he was very decent to me, and I feel beastly about his thinking that I let out things to the other fellows. I don't see how he can help thinking that.'

'I'm afraid you'll have to put up with that,' said Henderson. 'Perhaps you might go and see the old lady, and if you get a chance tell her that you hadn't anything to do with it. I'm thinking more about Norman. I've thought he was a scug for a long time. He's been trying on the same game as Williams; only Williams is a swell, although he's such a beast, and the Conquerer isn't, and never will be. He wants to be thought a lot of, and that's how he's trying to do it. When he gets up higher in the school he will turn out a sort of Williams. I should like to have a hand in stopping that.'

'I'm going to fight him,' said Jimmy, 'before the end of the term.'

Henderson laughed. 'He's a lot bigger than you,' he said.

'I don't care,' said Jimmy. 'I'm going to fight him.'

'All right, old boy,' said Henderson. 'I'll be your second.'

(*Continued on page* 266.)

"'I'm going to fight him,' said Jimmy, 'before the end of the term.'"

"He caught the toe of his skate, staggered forward a few yards, and then fell."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 263.)

CHAPTER XIII.

THE frost held at last. After coming and going in the most exasperating way to those who were continually looking forward to skating, and then being disappointed of it, ever since the turn of the year, it set in for a hard spell at the very end of February. Every outdoor game and sport was given up at Whyborough, and every spare minute was devoted to the ice. The boys rushed down to some of the little ponds about Whyborough in the shorter periods of freedom, and every afternoon a series of brakes took them over to Furstead, where they had the great expanse of the Broad to skate over, and the more adventurous spirits sought the river and flooded marshes beyond.

Jimmy had had exactly one day's skating in his life, but from the first he could play hockey with the other Lower School boys, some of whom had had even less practice than he had, and after a couple of days he had made such progress that he spent some of his time practising edges, and before the end of a week, when the frost broke for good, he could do a respectable eight and a sort of a three, which one more day's practice would have made a good one. But he missed that last day in a very unlucky manner.

He had got so keen on his edges that he had refused to play hockey in order to practise them, and retired to a remote corner of the Broad to be by himself and work hard at them. He varied his diligent efforts by an occasional spin about the Broad, and towards the end of the afternoon he found himself alone at the mouth of a little river which emptied itself into the Broad. He thought it would be rather amusing to skate up it for a bit, but when he had followed its windings for about half a mile he found the ice getting rotten and rough. He went on, and came to a better bit, and was just laying himself out for a fast stretch before turning back, when he saw another skater coming down the river towards him. He saw it was a Whyborough boy, and a First Eleven, by his cap, and then immediately recognised him for Williams, who had also spent this afternoon, as well as previous afternoons, very much by himself.

Williams was the last person Jimmy wanted to meet alone. Ever since the late disturbances he had never met him without being made to feel uncomfortable. Williams had never spoken to him, but had always looked him up and down with a sort of cold contempt and dislike. Jimmy had done nothing to deserve it, but he felt unhappy under Williams's disdain all the same, and had always thought that Williams was only waiting for an opportunity to do more than just look at him. He thought now that if he were to meet him on this lonely stretch of ice, with nobody within sight or hearing, the opportunity would be there ready to Williams's hand, and he might be expected to make use of it in a way that would be very disagreeable. He did not pause to think what it was that he might do, but turned tail at once and fled as fast as his new skill on skates could take him.

Jimmy had good eyesight, and he had recognised Williams across the flat marsh-country at quite a long distance off, and almost certainly before Williams could have recognised him. For he had no special cap to distinguish him, and one Lower boy in a dark suit is very much like another. And Williams was not skating very fast. Jimmy had a good chance of getting back to the Broad, and amongst other boys, before he could catch him up, even supposing he recognised and chased him.

He flew along with the steady marsh stroke which he had seen the natives use, and had practised in the intervals of his eights and threes. It went very well for a time, and then not so well, and just as he had gathered himself together for another effort the catastrophe came. He had reached that part of the river where the ice was rough, and rotten places had to be carefully skirted. He caught the toe of his skate, staggered forward a few yards, and then fell with a mighty crump. His pace had been enough to carry him some way forward as he sprawled on the ice and tried to stop himself. There was a very rotten place immediately in front of him, and he was sliding straight towards it. He tried to dig the points of his skates into the ice, and to wriggle himself aside at the same time. But nothing could save him; he came plump on to the bad place, and almost before he realised that he had fallen, the ice gave way and down he soused over his head into the cold water of the river.

He had a moment of blind terror as he came up and struck the ice over his head. For he had been carried on as he fell in, and came up past the hole he had made himself. He beat at the ice that was keeping him down under water, but could make no impression upon it. Then he gulped in a mouthful of water, and struggled hard without knowing what he was doing, until the water he took in filled his lungs and he lost consciousness.

Williams had not recognised Jimmy. He had seen a boy coming towards him up the river and then turn round and skate away as hard as he could. Williams had become used to being avoided in this way. A week or two before it would have amused him if anything. He did not love Lower boys, and had no wish to be loved by them, but only feared. But now he was feeling himself an outcast, which is a disagreeable sort of feeling for anybody, boy or man, and it gave him an unpleasant sensation to see himself shunned in this way. But he did not quicken his pace. There was nothing to be done about it. The Lower boy might escape to the society of his fellows. Williams had no wish to stop him.

A bend of the river and a stretch of bank a little higher than ordinary hid the Lower boy from sight, but he ought to have passed by it and been seen again in a very short time. He was not seen again, and Williams instinctively quickened his pace. He came round the bend of the river and saw a straight reach, upon which there was no figure; but after going a few yards further he saw the tell-tale hole in the ice.

He raced towards it as hard as he could go. Everything unworthy in his nature was forgotten. There was a life in danger, and his only impulse was to save it if he could.

He had time, before he came to the hole, on which broken pieces of ice were floating, to make up his mind as to what had happened. The boy who had fallen in had been carried on, and what he had to do was to break the ice as quickly as possible just beyond the hole

and free him. He also had time to look round him, and saw that there was a marsh farm a quarter of a mile or so on his right, and by great good luck there was a man with a cart in the road which led to it. He seemed to be looking towards the river, and Williams hoped that he had already seen the accident. He waved and shouted towards him as he sped on, and then forgot all about him. For he had to do himself what was immediately to be done, and needed all his attention to do it.

(*Continued on page* 278.)

HOW TO MAKE PINS AND NEEDLES FLOAT.

YOU can make pins and needles float in two different ways if they are quite dry to start with. One way is to get some one to give you a cigarette paper that has never been used, and is therefore quite flat, and lay it on the surface of the water with a pin or a needle on top. After a little while water will soak into the paper, which will become heavy and sink, but the pin will be left floating if the water is not disturbed.

Another way is to suspend a needle from two pieces of thread with loops tied in the ends, lowering gently to the surface and removing the threads very gradually. This requires great care, and the experiment is more likely to succeed if the needle is first wiped with a greasy cloth.

THE BLOCK-TIN KETTLE.

NO more upon the glowing hob
He carols cheerfully,
Bidding us hurry up and lay
The cups and plates for tea.

His block-tin armour lost its shine
Before a month was out,
And then to our dismay he seemed
To wish to shed his spout.

Misfortunes followed thick and fast,
For only just last week
A sputter on the fire proclaimed
The presence of a leak.

'Twas then we sadly led him forth
And fixed him up that tree,
To make a waterproof abode
For Robin's family.

So now, instead of carolling
His joyous songs of tea,
The Robins carol out of him
With even greater glee!

G. BAIRD.

DRAGON.

AGATHA, a girl about thirteen years of age, lived with a wealthy uncle close to a beautiful river. As she was an orphan, the uncle had adopted her. He had her educated at a first-rate school in the neighbouring town, and very proud he was of her successes. For Agatha was always winning prizes.

Upon one occasion, she had done so very well at school that her uncle thought he really must give her a special reward. So he took her to the town, and bade her look into the shop-windows. He promised to buy for her whatever pretty thing she liked best.

Agatha's choice was a long, broad, beautiful silken scarf of rainbow hues, exquisitely blended. The price was high, but that did not matter to the rich uncle. Agatha was delighted with the gift.

A few days later, she was crossing the river on the ferry-boat, when one of her fellow-passengers exclaimed, 'Oh, do look at that poor dog!'

In the middle of the stream a big dog, with a heavy stone attached to his neck by a cord, was swimming for his life. He was almost exhausted, and could scarcely keep his head above the water. As the boat came near to him, his appealing look said plainly, '*Do* help me!'

But the poor creature was just out of reach, and every moment it seemed as if he must sink and drown. Then Agatha quickly unwound the long scarf from her neck and shoulders, and grasping one end of it firmly in her hand, flung out the other end in the direction of the struggling dog. It was such a good throw that the scarf actually touched the dog's nose. With all his remaining strength, he clutched it between his teeth; then, aided by other passengers and the ferryman, Agatha gently hauled in the scarf. In this way the dog, in spite of the cruel weight which hampered him, safely reached the boat, into which he was lifted by kind and eager hands.

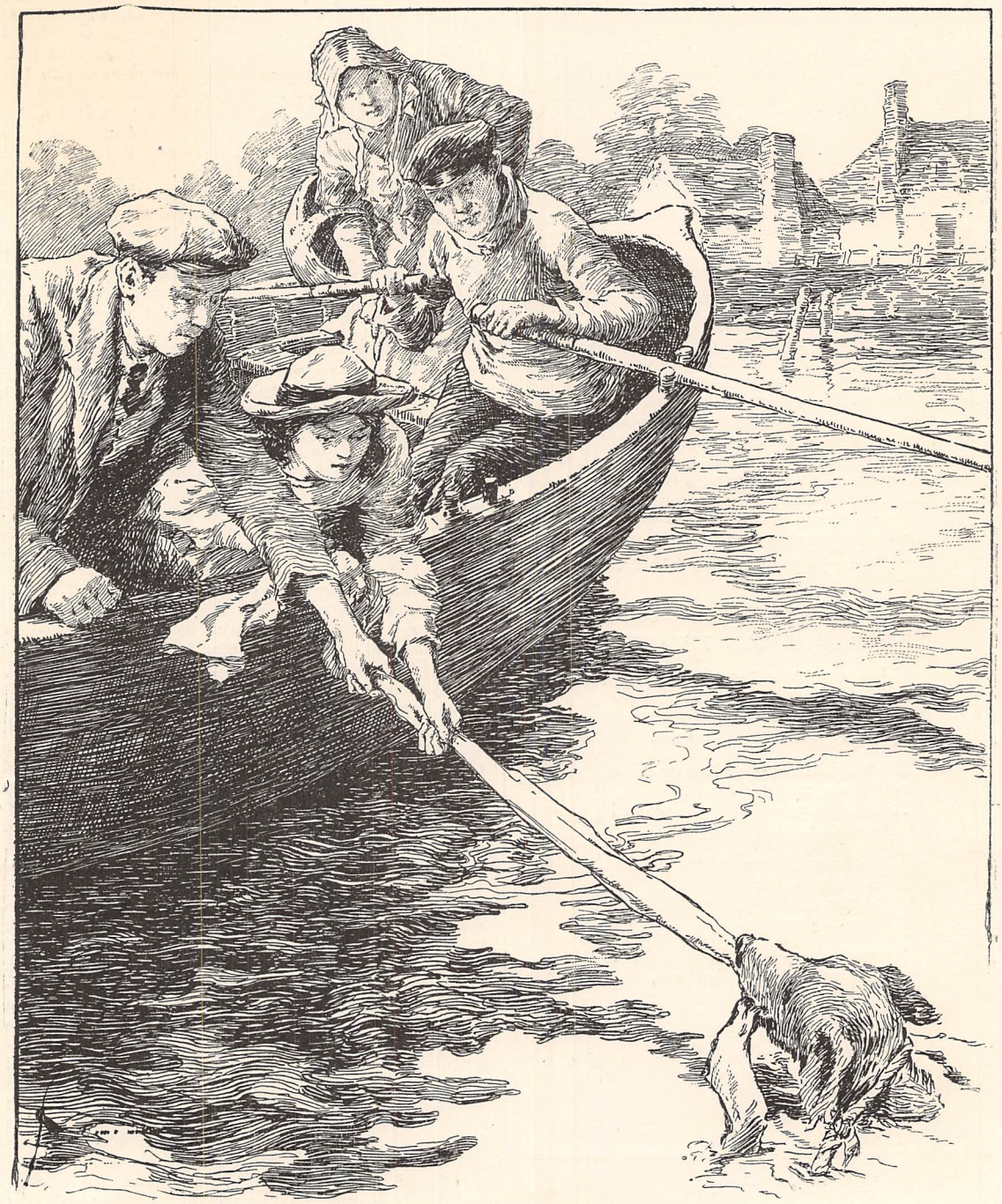
Dragon—as his name proved to be—soon recovered from the effects of his too-prolonged bath. He attached himself to Agatha, and followed her wherever she went, his eyes saying, 'You saved me, and I am yours.' At night he slept on the mat outside her bedroom door.

Agatha's uncle found out to whom the dog belonged. He was a farmer's dog, and some thieves whom he attacked in defence of his master's property had tied the stone about his neck, and thrown him into the river out of their way.

The uncle was not a bit vexed because the scarf was draggled and torn. Like his niece, he had a kind heart. But he said that the dog must be returned to his owner. Dragon, however, obstinately refused to be returned. Again and again he was taken to the farm, and immediately came back to Agatha, until at last the farmer told her to keep him.

And always there was that grateful and devoted look in Dragon's eyes. It was not long before he had an opportunity of serving his dear mistress. One day, Agatha was crossing a field in which was a bull. Something in her appearance—probably the red ribbon in her hat—irritated the animal, though she did not notice him until a herd-boy on the other side of the hedge shouted a warning to her. Then the terrified child ran, but it was too late! The bull was upon her. At that perilous moment Dragon rushed to the rescue. Flying at the huge beast's throat, he bit it so savagely that the bull turned tail and ran away. But Agatha had fainted, and her deliverer, having vanquished the foe, now turned to his friend, whining, and licking her white face.

Several persons came running to the spot; but Agatha, when she revived, had eyes for none but Dragon. Throwing her arms around him, she kissed him again and again. But though he was overjoyed to see that

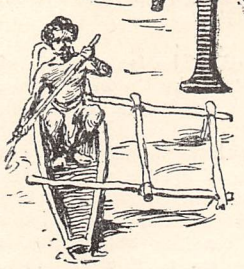


"With all his remaining strength he clutched it between his teeth."

his mistress was better, and showed his joy in the usual manner by wagging his tail, she noticed that he winced at her touch. Then it was found that he had been rather badly wounded by the bull's horn. Agatha, in great distress, sent for the veterinary surgeon. Happily, Dragon's hurt proved to be curable, and never was wounded soldier more tenderly nursed than was he.

E. D.

THE FIJIAN BOAT-BUILDERS.



THE Fijians were for a long time the most expert boat-builders in all the islands of the South Pacific; and though at the present time they may not be able to beat all their neighbours at this work, they still rank with the Tongans and Samoans as the builders of the largest native boats or canoes in these seas.

The boats which the Fijians build are not all of one kind, however, and they are not always large. Passing over the rafts or catamarans, which are scarcely worthy to be called boats, we find that the natives construct three or four kinds of canoes. Those which are not more than thirty feet long are usually cut out of a single tree; but the largest boats, which are those usually described as double-canoes, are built up of many pieces, and are good examples of true boat-building.

I should like, if possible, to give you some idea of the manner in which the Fijians build their double-canoes. I must, however, first describe one of these boats in such a way that you may afterwards follow the description of the work of boat-building. The double-canoe, then, consists of two long and narrow canoes, placed parallel to each other, but at a little distance apart, and joined by a flat deck which extends like a bridge from one to the other. This deck, which I will call the great

deck, covers about a third of each of the canoes, leaving the pointed ends projecting in front and behind. Each of these ends is covered with a slightly arched deck, just as our English canoes are decked, and it will prevent confusion, perhaps, if I call these decks the prow-decks. One of the canoes, the boat proper, is larger than the other, which is believed to have been developed out of a huge log which was used as an outrigger to prevent the narrow canoe being blown over when it carried a sail. Upon the great deck there is a little shed with a sloping roof, the front of which is turned to the canoe's side. Above the roof of the shed there is a flat stage, upon which the Fijian loves to sit basking in the hot sun, while his boat flies through the water.

The Fijians commence building their boats by laying down a keel which is formed of two or three pieces of wood carefully joined together end to end by slanting joints. From this keel the sides of the canoe are built up piece by piece. Each piece is not a long well-shapen plank, but a board split out from the log and hewed smooth with an axe. It may be any length from three to twenty feet, and as the large pieces are built in first, irregular openings are often left to be closed up afterwards, when suitable smaller pieces can be found. The canoe has at first no ribs, and the boards are fastened together in a peculiar way, which is sometimes described as sewing, though that word hardly gives a true idea of the work. Upon one side of each plank a ledge or flange is left close to each edge. As each plank is placed in position the flange upon its lower edge touches the flange upon the upper edge of the plank below, the two flanges being upon the inner side of the boat. Through each flange the Fijian bores a number of holes in a slanting direction, so that they come out upon the edge of the plank, and these holes are spaced at equal distances along the plank, so that when the edges of two planks are placed together the holes of each tally. Taking a cord of sinnet, made from the braided fibres of the cocoanut husk, the boat-builder passes it several times through a pair of these holes and binds the flanges firmly together.

He has already placed a packing or caulking of bark cloth between the edges of the planks, and this packing he has smeared with a pitch made from the bread-fruit tree. When, therefore, the planks are tightly bound together by means of the sinnet, he has a close water-tight joint, even though the edges of the plank itself have not been trimmed very straight with the axe. In order to make the joints still closer, the Fijian drives little wooden wedges between the sinnet and the flanges, and thus tightens the bindings of the cords

The boat-builder proceeds in this way until the hull of the canoe is deep enough to receive its prow-decks. Each of these is formed of one piece, which is shaped to fit upon the pointed end of the canoe. It is slightly hollowed on the under surface, but a ledge is left on the sides, and this rests upon the upper edges of the canoe. A half-round strip of wood is laid upon the outside of the boat, so that its flat surface covers the joining of the prow-deck and the canoe. Holes are bored through the edge of the deck and the edge of the boat above and below this strip, and the deck is fastened on by means of coils of sinnet which pass round the strip and bind it over the joint.

The great deck has now to be added. The sides of the middle portion of the canoe are first raised higher, by fixing deep planks upon the gunwale, which are made fast by a binding of sinnet passing over a strip of wood, just as in the case of the prow-decks. They are further strengthened by the ribs, which are now inserted in the boat. To the upper edge of the planks stout posts are fixed perpendicularly, and these form slots or sockets for the ends of the beams which extend from one canoe to the other, and bear a deck of light wood. Upon this are erected the shed, the platform, and a few spars which look like horizontal bars, and serve as racks for weapons, baskets, &c. One tall mast, having a forked end, is fixed in a hole upon the deck, and it carries a large triangular sail. A few holes are left in the great deck, through which the rowers work their paddles when the canoe is not under sail. There are also holes leading to the holds of the canoes, by means of which they may be bailed. These holds are not used for shelter or for storage. The great deck, with its hut and its stage, is the Fijians' ship, and the canoes serve only to float it. Sometimes, indeed, when the double-canoe is flying grandly through a choppy sea, the prow-decks are buried in the water and the foam, and are only seen occasionally from the great deck.

W. A. Atkinson.

THE ANCIENT MAKING OF IRON AND STEEL.

IT has been well said that the world does not know the names of its greatest men. Who, for example, first invented the wheel, or who was the first maker of fire? And the same ignorance exists concerning the first winning of metals from their ores in the earth.

Certain it is that the ancient Hindus, several thousands of years back, knew how to win and work metals. Evidence of this is afforded by the manufacture of iron and of steel in the hilly districts of Northern India by methods which have not varied for as long as history bears any record.

The small furnace, not more than eight feet high, built very roughly of stones piled one above the other, and daubed over with clay to make it air-tight, was set at the end of a narrow gorge in the hills through which the wind blew in a more or less constant direction. This wind would feed the fire, acting as a natural bellows; and was the forerunner of the huge, forced air 'blasts' of our modern blast furnaces. The iron ore, dug up from the top layers of the ground and mixed with charcoal, made by slowly burning wood, was put in at the top of the small furnace, and the fire urged for a few hours.

Cinder and iron were formed. The temperature of the furnace was not sufficient to make the metal melt, and thus allow of any moulding, but it was hot enough to make the iron soft and pasty. At the end of the few hours, the lump of metal, wet with the liquid cinder, was dragged out of the top and placed upon a rough-hewn piece of stone. Here it was hammered and hammered whilst still hot, in order that all the liquid cinder might be squeezed out. After the hammering, a lump of good iron, weighing up to thirty pounds, remained.

The Hindus, too, had a very simple way of making excellent steel, which they used for weapons and for

cutting tools. Steel is practically pure iron, in which a little carbon is dissolved. They melted a small charge of iron mixed with leaves or wood. The leaves or wood supplied the carbon, which dissolved in the iron, and when the whole mass was allowed to cool, steel was the result.

Content with these simple methods of their forefathers, the Hindus have made little or no attempt to improve upon them. Taking as little trouble as possible to find their ore and other materials, they have wandered from place to place working out the surface supplies of these things; have built their rough little furnaces, and have left behind them only the heaps of cinders to tell the tale that ancient men had there laboured to win from Mother Earth her well-held treasures.

WILLIAM H. PICK, B.Sc., F.C.S.

HELD TO RANSOM.

BY V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 258.)

FOR a moment there was silence. Mulai Hafid appeared wrapped in thought, his dark eyes searching the prisoner's face. Langridge, with the hands of the soldiers gripping his arms, stood motionless, waiting in piteous suspense.

But at last the Moorish leader spoke, and there was fierce contempt in his voice: 'No; I will not spare you! How can I trust you? How do I know that you will not betray me, as you offer to betray my brother? Once a traitor, always a traitor. Take him away and obey my orders!'

Then, in his despair, the fear of instant death seemed to unman Langridge completely. He fell upon his knees. he struggled with his guards, he implored Mulai Hafid to spare his life, if only for a few days.

It was terrible to see and hear him, to listen to his entreaties, and to watch Mulai Hafid's stern, relentless face. Sandy broke down completely, covering his ears with his hands, and Dick, with a great lump in his throat, felt at the same time desperately sorry for the man and desperately ashamed. He saw that Langridge was worn out with fatigue and almost beside himself, but he wished, from his heart, that he would not so lower himself before this savage chief—he, an Englishman.

Suddenly the prisoner's face changed; he struggled to his knees and spoke in a different voice, 'Listen, O Mulai Hafid! I have somewhat else to say.'

'Nay, cease to trouble me!' the Moor said, contemptuously. 'Drag him away, men! I will hear no more of these fair promises of the traitor.'

'This is no question of promises—this is no matter of a word which may be false or true . . . This which I would tell you of is gold—much gold!'

Mulai Hafid's whole manner changed very abruptly. He shifted his position and leant forward with a keen, covetous look.

To both the opposing Moorish armies at that time one thing was essential. Whichever leader had most money available with which to pay his troops, buy their provisions, and bribe neutral chiefs, was certain of victory in the end. And money was very scarce in the coffers of Mulai Hafid.

Hence it arose that he spoke almost kindly. 'Well, say on. I will hear what you have to tell me.'

Langridge struggled to his feet, and spoke in a low, hurried voice. 'I can tell you of a great treasure, which has been concealed for many years where none might find it. If you will spare my life it all shall be yours, O Mu ai Hafid.'

'Where is this treasure?' the Moorish leader asked, coldly, yet without being able to conceal the growing eagerness in his voice.

'It is hidden not far from here, in a very secret place. I will lead any whom you appoint thither, but never would you find it without my help.'

'And you will give that help in payment for your life?' Mulai Hafid said, thoughtfully.

'Yes—I swear it!'

'It is a great treasure, you say?'

'Very great. There is so much gold that I do not know how to reckon it.'

'Well, in this case it matters little whether your word be true or false,' the Pretender said, shrewdly. 'If you deliver this treasure to me, and if truly it is as great and costly as you say, I will spare your life, and you shall go free and unharmed. If it is not forthcoming, or if you practise treachery against me, you shall die. I will appoint men to go with you to-morrow to the place where it is hidden; we will see what your promises are worth. Take him away and guard him well; it is enough.'

Before the soldiers could obey, a sudden interruption startled even the dignified Mulai Hafid. A small figure started forward and faced the Moorish leader, speaking in fluent, uneven Arabic. 'No—it is not enough! The treasure is not his to give you; it is ours—ours!'

It had taken some minutes for the two boys to grasp fully the drift of Langridge's promises, since the language quickly spoken was still difficult to follow. But at last, hearing the word 'treasure' repeated again and again, they had realised the truth.

'Dick, do you hear?' Sandy whispered. 'It's *our* treasure he's giving away; he's going to tell the brutes where it is hidden.'

'I believe he is,' Dick answered. 'Just to save his life; oh, it's a mean trick!'

'I won't stand it!' Sandy muttered, and before Dick could interfere, the younger boy sprang forward and flung out his protest.

Mulai Hafid stared for a few moments, and then spoke contemptuously. 'Who is this?'

'One of the Jewish boys, Sidi, whom we caught with the Nazarani.'

'You say the treasure is yours?'

'Mine and my brother's!' Sandy retorted; whilst Langridge behind him broke into incoherent protests.

But Mulai Hafid paid no heed to either; he looked from one to the other with his keen, insolent eyes, and spoke coolly. 'Take them all away. Let them quarrel, if they please, as to whose treasure it may be. It matters not at all, so it be mine in the end. So—take them away.'

The guards obeyed, and Langridge and the boys were led out roughly. Sandy made no further resistance; he had the sense to see that protests at the moment were useless.

(*Continued on page* 274.)

"'The treasure is not his to give you; it is ours—ours!'"

"A very few moments sufficed for Dick to find what he wanted."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 271.)

THEY were all three shut into a low, foul-smelling outhouse, which had evidently been used as a stable. The uneven earthern floor was covered with pools of dirty water, and the only furnishing was a pile of straw in one corner.

Upon this Langridge flung himself down, and for some moments there was silence. It was the man himself who spoke at last, and there was half-ashamed defiance in his voice and manner.

'You can't blame me for taking the only chance there was to save my life . . . *our* lives . . .'

'I didn't hear you mention us,' Dick said, bitterly. 'And, anyway, it was a mean thing to do.'

'Surely, you don't grudge the money . . . ?' Langridge said, sullenly.

'Yes, we do.' Dick spoke with sudden, fierce resolution. 'It's not for our own sake, as you very well know; it's for our father. We can't pay the ransom—we can't save his life without that money . . . and now—now—you've stolen it . . .'

'Most likely it isn't there—I've never believed in it,' the man muttered.

'Then what good will it do to you?'

'It gained time anyway . . . good heavens, can't you understand, boy? Don't you realise that if I hadn't acted as I did, I should be dead by now?'

'And so you sold our father to save yourself . . . but you shan't do it!' Suddenly Dick's expression altered, and a look of resolution came into his eyes. 'I've just remembered,' he said. 'You mayn't find it quite so easy as you think to give away our secret. . . . Sandy, come and help me.'

As he spoke, he sprang to Langridge's side, and, with the younger boy's help, began to search him. Pinioned as he was, and taken by surprise, the man was utterly helpless, and a very few moments sufficed for Dick to find what he wanted.

He stood up triumphantly, holding in his hand the paper upon which was copied the inscriptions on the stone. 'There!' he said. 'Now, tell Mulai Hafid where the treasure is hidden—if you can!'

Langridge was deadly pale, and the haggard fear of death had returned to his eyes. 'For heaven's sake, give it back to me!' he said, hoarsely.

'Our father's life is worth more to us than yours,' said Dick, resolutely. 'We'll make our own bargain.'

'The paper will be no good to you,' Langridge threatened. 'I shall tell them where it is, and they will take it from you. . . .'

'It won't be anywhere,' Dick said, deliberately. 'Because I'm going to destroy it—now.'

'You won't . . . you won't!' Langridge implored. 'It would be madness . . . you would have no clue yourselves to the place.'

'We shall learn every bit of it by heart first, both of us,' Dick assured him. 'There's really not much to remember.'

'They will torture you to find out the secret—if I give you away.'

'Perhaps we shall tell them anyhow—when we've made our bargain,' the elder boy said firmly, and sat down, with Sandy beside him, to study the paper which he held.

The look of despair deepened in the man's eyes. He fell silent, his head sunk forward on his breast. Neither of the boys had the least intention of allowing Langridge to be killed; their bargain, as they fully meant, should include his life. But nobody, except the man himself, could know upon what a very slender thread that life depended, how all-important the possession of the secret had been to him.

It was after a very long silence that Langridge spoke, and his voice and manner had completely changed. He drew a long breath, like one who has come to a momentous decision. 'Well, I suppose I must tell you,' he said, slowly. 'It's something which, for many reasons, I had hoped to keep secret a little longer, but after all, you might as well know it now. And, as far as I am concerned, I shall be glad . . .'

'What is it?' Dick asked, curiously.

'Don't you guess?' There was a curious kind of appeal in the man's low voice.

'How can we?'

'Then . . . it may be rather a shock to you.'

'I wish you'd tell us,' said Sandy, impatiently.

'I will. I am your Father.'

(*Continued on page* 287.)

'NIL DESPERANDUM.'

THERE'S a song that is sung by the climber so bold,
As he steadily mounts where the hills gleam with gold;
It nerves him to courage when Hope sinks down low,
And bids him mount upward and cheerfully go.
He raises his eyes, nor a look casts behind,
Though the track seems a long one with many a wind;
For he sings as he hopefully upward doth fare,
'Nil desperandum'—Oh, never despair!

Oh, you who mount up with slow steps day by day,
To the heights of success that seem so far away—
This peak and that past, yet more seem to remain—
Take heart and take hope, and press on once again.
Oh, think of the brave ones who've climbed these like you,
How stout was their courage, how hopeful, how true!
Set your teeth and press onward, still hopefully fare,
'Nil desperandum'—Oh, never despair!

Frank Ellis.

THE PALACE OF VANITY: A LEGEND.

(From the French of Madame de Girardin.)

ON the side of a broad highway where many people travelled stood a magnificent palace. It had a fine façade on every wall, and was surrounded by stately pillars, which shaded it from the light. But that mattered little, as there were plenty of lustres in the rooms. The dome of the palace was gilded, and could be seen from a long distance.

The queen who lived in this lovely palace was very beautiful; but instead of a heart she had a large diamond shaped like a heart, so she could not love any one.

On the front of the palace stood these words written in ruby letters:—

'HERE YOU WILL FIND WHATEVER YOU DESIRE.'

A young traveller who was walking along the road read the words, and cried joyfully, 'I'll go into this

wonderful palace; for I'm tired of being poor, and would like to be rich for a change!'

As he hurried in through one of the doors he saw a beggar sitting close to it on a stone, and laughing heartily. Surprised at his mirth the young traveller said: 'Are you laughing at me, old man? But I should make merry at your expense, for you are foolish to be in rags at the gate of a palace, when you have only to wish for a new coat to be dressed like a prince. Perhaps you cannot read the words written in ruby letters over the door."

'Oh, yes, I can read the words, although they are written in rubies,' answered the old man with a smile.

'Then you must wish for nothing, or you would have entered the palace.'

'I desire many things, my friend; but they cannot be had here.'

The old man looked so cunning that the young traveller distrusted him, and thought he was trying to keep the new-comer out of the palace. The beggar seemed to know his thoughts, for he added: 'No harm will come to you in the palace, and you need not be afraid to go into it.'

'Shall I be able to get out of it?'

'Undoubtedly, if you find nothing there to please you.'

The traveller paused, for he saw many people pass along the road, and none of them seemed to wish to enter the palace. He thought this very strange. So he asked the beggar the reason why they shunned it.

'These travellers have heard about the palace already, and know that people grow bored there; every one wishes to amuse himself. If you will give me the price of a bottle of wine I'll go in there with you, and we'll laugh at the fools who live there.'

'Agreed, my friend,' cried the young traveller as he handed the beggar a piece of money.

Together they walked up to the crystal door. Beside it stood a golden bell with a lovely pear-shaped pearl for a clapper. The traveller had never seen such a beautiful gem, and he stood motionless before it for a moment. Growing impatient at the delay the beggar cried: 'Ring the bell, young man.'

'But I am too afraid of spoiling the pearl to ring the bell.'

'I'll ring, then, for I'm not anxious about breaking the pearl.'

'No, let us knock instead—' began the young traveller. Then he paused, for remembering the door was made of crystal, he feared a heavy blow might break it.

Tired at the delay the beggar seized the knocker, and struck such a heavy blow that the beautiful door was shivered into a thousand pieces.

There was no one in the hall. On the walls hung the pictures of kings and queens, princes and princesses. The statues of gods and goddesses stood there, and the furniture was richly gilded. The floor was paved with jasper and porphyry, and was so slippery from polish that the young traveller in his heavy shoes had to cling to the walls to prevent himself from falling. He would have been much the better of a pair of skates. The old man slipped also, but his staff helped him.

With great difficulty they reached a large hall where many fine lords and ladies sat. Their clothes were richly embroidered with jewels, and they wore costly bracelets, necklaces, and tiaras. The men had caps ornamented with ostrich feathers.

'Who are these people?' said the young traveller, turning to the beggar.

'They are only the servants of the palace,' answered the old man.

He was right, for these fine lords and ladies lost no time in coming to take the visitors' orders.

The old man said to the servants: 'Show us the wonders of the palace. This young traveller thinks of living here always; but before uttering his wishes, he wants to know something about you.'

The young traveller was greatly surprised that these fine servants obeyed the old beggar so willingly; but he dared not ask any more questions.

A fat elderly housekeeper stepped forward, and handed the keys to the valet who was to lead the visitors over the palace. Behind her stood two little pages who followed her like her shadow. Whenever she moved quickly, and without giving them due warning, she pulled them both down on their noses, while their weight drew her down on her back. Being very heavy she hurt herself, and some of the other servants hurried to her help.

'A court mantle is rather a hindrance to housework,' remarked the beggar with a twinkle in his eyes.

The visitors now reached the dining-room, and the servant asked: 'Do you wish to sup, gentlemen?'

'Yes, certainly,' answered the beggar; 'a good meal is not vanity.'

The guests seated themselves at the table. But the meal was a sad disappointment. The dishes were too highly flavoured, or salted, so that it was impossible to make out what they were. Everything was cold, for the hot-water plates being of malachite, no one dared pour water into them. The beggar remarked sadly, as he handed back his golden plate to the servant: 'I'd rather have an omelette on a pewter platter.'

In bowing to take the plate the servant forgot how close he was to the lustre, and his fine ostrich caught fire, so that the hall was soon reeking with the smell of burnt feathers. The old man smiled, and remarked wisely: 'Fine plumes are not very suitable for waiting at table.' Then turning to the servant he asked: 'Is your royal mistress, Princess Vanita, at home now?'

'No, sir,' the lackey replied; 'she is away in the country with her favourite followers.'

Perched on a rich rod a pretty paroquet was screeching at the top of its voice: 'Leave here quickly, leave here very quickly! Don't stop in this palace!'

The young traveller thought it strange that the bird should utter these words, so he went over to her, and asked: 'Why should I not stay here, if I wish? Are you unhappy in this beautiful palace?'

'Yes, I am,' answered the bird; 'I wished to be beautiful, and wanted golden claws, and ruby wings. I have got them, but I must stay here motionless all my life. For I cannot fly with such heavy wings, or walk with golden claws.'

Near the window lay a large cat which never moved, and looked very discontented. The young traveller wanted to find out why it was so sad, so he asked kindly: 'What is the matter with you, pussy?'

'Before I answer your question tell me whether I have the honour of speaking to a horse, a serpent, a donkey, a man, or a woman,' replied the cat, 'for I cannot see you.'

'Then you are blind, poor pussy!'

'Yes, and entirely through my own fault. I had often heard people praise emerald eyes, so I wished for

"These fine lords and ladies lost no time in coming to take the visitors' orders."

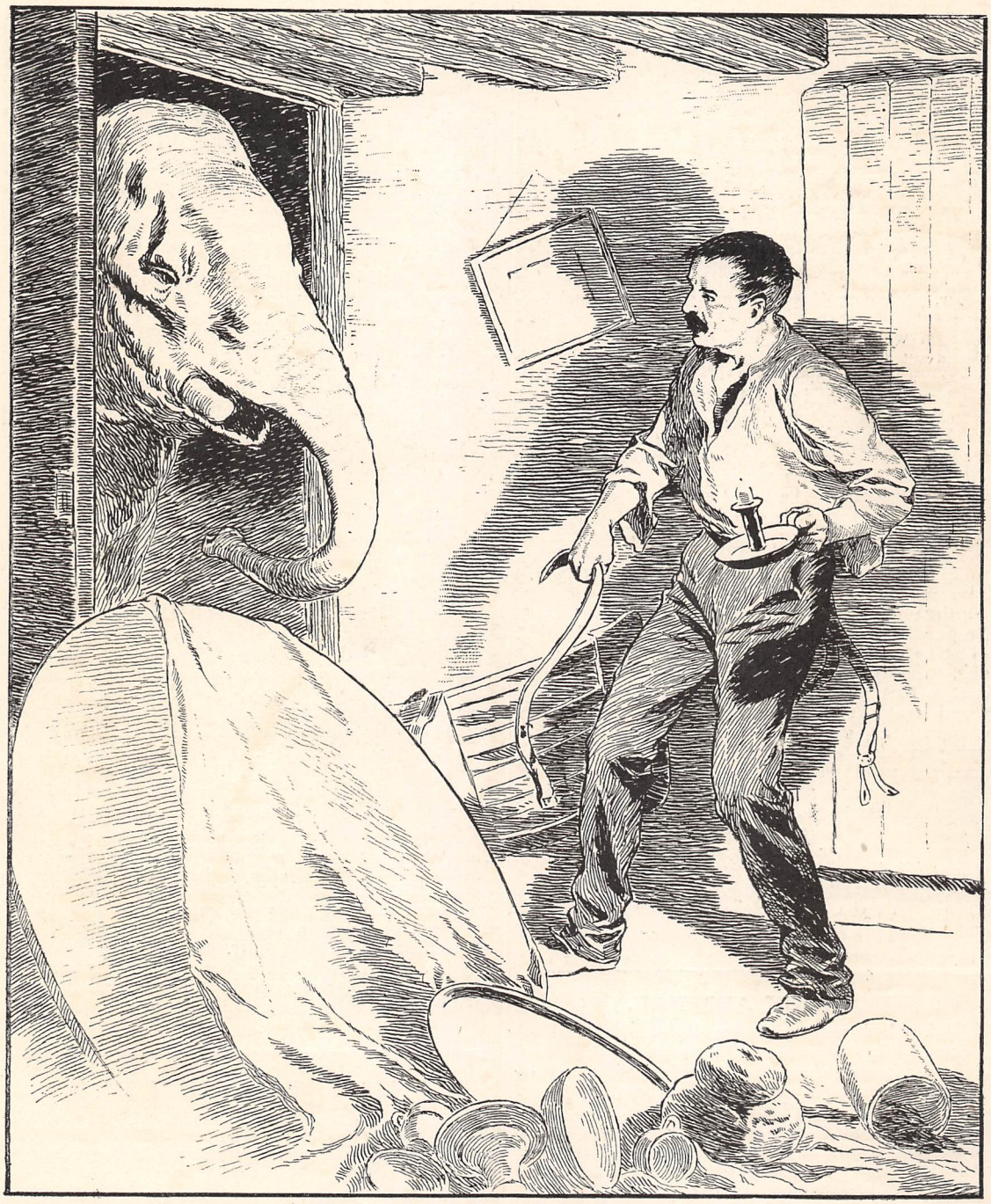
them, and lost my sight. Will you tell me if you think they suit my face?'

The good-natured young traveller was about to answer yes, but the old beggar said roughly: 'Your eyes are very ugly, and don't suit you in the least.'

'But surely they must shine brightly,' wailed the unhappy cat.

'No, gems only shine in their proper place, and not when they are used as eyes.'

(*Concluded on page* 290.)



"He came face to face with the elephant."

THE NOCTURNAL ADVENTURES OF AN ELEPHANT.

AN elephant belonging to a menagerie which was visiting the town of E—— was lodged one night in a stable. Its keeper at first slept with, and after wards without it, for during the night the elephant broke away, while the man slumbered on.

Two strong doors and a gate separated the elephant from the street, in which it thought it would like to take a walk. 'Where there's a will there's a way.' The elephant made short work of the doors. It lifted

the gate off the hinges, put it on one side, and walked out. A little way down the street, it turned into an opening which led to a coach-house. That the doors were barred was nothing to the elephant, which calmly removed the bar, and then took a look round. In a large box was six stone of barley-flour. Having devoured this, the elephant put the box outside, and began upon a four-stone barrel of bran. This was quickly consumed, and the marauder, seeing nothing else to its taste, left the coach-house. The next thing to attract its attention was a cabbage-patch containing eighty broccoli, of which it ate all but two.

After this, the elephant visited a cottage occupied by a man named Abbott. It forced the lock, and opened the door, but was too big to enter the room. But the resourceful elephant then extended its trunk, which upset a table on which were set, in readiness for breakfast, cups and saucers, a basin full of sugar, and also a lamp. There was a loud crash. The noise aroused Abbott, who jumped out of bed, and went to the top of the stairs. 'Hullo!' he shouted, 'who's there?'

As there was no reply, he went back to his bedroom, slipped on some of his clothes, and, carrying a lighted candle in one hand and a strap in the other, cautiously descended the stairs. The house was one of those old-fashioned cottages which have a door at the foot of the stairs. When Abbott opened this door, he came face to face with the elephant! It stood in the doorway just opposite to him, its face all over white with barley-flour, and its trunk protruding into the room. It had gobbled up all the sugar except four lumps.

No wonder the man was alarmed! However, he did the best he could, and, by waving his hands about, and crying, 'Shoosh! shoosh!' he succeeded in getting the animal to back out. He then hurriedly finished dressing, and went out in search of the menagerie people. He had not far to go. In the street he met two of them, carrying lanterns, one being the keeper, who had now woke up, and who was in great anxiety about his charge.

The elephant was captured, but not put to bed again. Indigestion might be the result of such gorging as the animal had indulged in, and in the circumstances exercise was considered better for its health than repose. So, for the remainder of the night it was kept in constant motion, being marched up and down the main street of the town. All the dogs in the place barked as they heard the tramp of the elephant's feet, and the townsfolk had little sleep that night. E. D.

WOOLWICH ARSENAL.

TWO hundred years ago the Government had a foundry for the casting of brass cannon in Moorfields, and Woolwich was famous only for its dockyards, where several great ships had been launched from the time of Henry VIII. onward.

The casting of cannon in the Moorfields foundry was an interesting spectacle which visitors were regularly permitted to see, a gallery being erected for their accommodation. A considerable number of damaged cannon taken in the campaigns under the Duke of Marlborough had been collected at the works, and in 1716 it was decided to recast them. Many people assembled, as usual, to witness the operation, and among them was a young Swiss, named Andrew Schalch, who was travelling in England. He was allowed to inspect the moulds, and he discovered that a certain amount of moisture had accumulated in them. Having some experience of foundry work, he realised the danger of an explosion when the hot metal converted the water to steam, and he told his fears to the Surveyor-General of the Ordnance, Colonel Armstrong, and advised him—and, indeed, every one who could—to get out of the building before the metal was cast. Colonel Armstrong, after questioning the young Swiss very carefully and discovering that he knew what he was talking about, took his advice and left the building; but there were many spectators who could not be persuaded that there was any cause for uneasiness, and they remained in the foundry.

As Schalch had predicted, an explosion occurred as soon as the molten brass ran into the wet moulds. The metal was blown in all directions; part of the roof of the foundry was lifted off, and the galleries collapsed under the spectators. Several people lost their lives, while others received broken limbs or were badly burnt.

Schalch returned quietly to his lodgings, and probably thought that no one would have any further interest in him. But a few days later a friend informed him of an advertisement asking him to call at the Ordnance Office, where he might hear of something to his advantage. He did so, and had another long conversation with Colonel Armstrong. Other interviews followed, and in the end Schalch was intrusted with the work of finding a site for a new royal arsenal, the Government having resolved to abandon the foundry at Moorfields. The site was to be outside London, but within twelve miles of it. Schalch, after visiting several places, fixed upon a rabbit-warren at Woolwich. He was allowed to superintend the building of the new arsenal, and was then appointed Master Founder, an office which he held for nearly sixty years. It is said that no accidents in the casting occurred during that time. Some of the mortars which he cast are still in existence, and bear his name. He died at the age of ninety in 1776, and was buried in Woolwich Churchyard.

The old foundry at Moorfields remained empty for a long time. In 1739, however, Wesley took a lease of it for 115*l.*, and fitted it up as a place of worship.

Woolwich Arsenal now covers an area of three hundred and fifty acres, and employs in ordinary busy times twelve thousand or fourteen thousand men. It has seven miles of roads and seven miles of railway. It possesses nearly a score of steam hammers, one of which, a forty-ton hammer, cost over fifty thousand pounds. The works turn out normally about six thousand tons of guns annually, and the laboratory can manufacture two million cartridges every week.

W. A. Atkinson.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 267.)

WILLIAMS brought himself up as he neared the rotten ice, and then threw himself flat on the good ice and stretched himself towards the hole. It cracked ominously as he wriggled along, and he felt that he would not be safe if he went any further than would just enable him to reach the

far end of the hole with his hands. He broke off quite easily a foot or two of the ice at the edge, but then it became thicker, and still there were no signs of the boy who was lying beneath it. He tried frantically to break off more, but could not. He had an idea of hammering at it with a skate. But his skates were screwed to his boots, and he had no time to take one of them off. He raised himself up and shouted with all the force of his lungs, but could not see over the bank whether the man on the cart was coming to his help. Then, forgetting the danger, he drew himself nearer to the hole to get more leverage to break off the ice. He did break off a few more inches, and then the ice gave way once more, and he fell into the hole himself.

The river was not deep here, and he struggled up and found himself standing in soft mud, with water up to his armpits. He did not lose a moment, but, gasping for breath and shaking his head to get the water out of his eyes, he felt under the ice as far as his arms would reach. He could just touch the body motionless in the water with the tips of his fingers, but could not catch hold of anything by which to draw it in. So he took a deep breath and plunged in beneath the thick ice himself, and immediately after emerged holding the limp and unconscious Jimmy in his arms.

He had a moment's hesitation and revulsion of feeling when he saw who it was that he was holding. He had been thinking of Jimmy most of the afternoon, during which he had been alone, to indulge in the black feelings which the disgrace he had fallen into had created in his mind. Jimmy had been the cause of that disgrace, and now it was Jimmy whom he had saved, probably from death; and if there had been no great risk to himself, yet he had shown himself ready and resourceful and had shrunk from nothing that had stood in his way.

The hesitation was only momentary. It was an unknown boy in need of succour whom he had set out to rescue, and the life-saving instinct, which is one of the noblest in human nature, was still strong within him. Everything else was forgotten again, and he set himself to struggle out of the mud that was clogging his feet and to get to land with his lifeless burden.

It was no easy task. The mud was thick and held his feet. There was thin ice to be broken between him and the bank. The intense cold was beginning to sap his energies. And finally, it was an effort almost beyond him to carry Jimmy so that his mouth and nostrils should be clear of the water.

But further help was at hand. The man in the cart had, fortunately, seen Jimmy's fall. He had not seen him tumble into the hole, for the bank had hidden him; but Williams's shouts, and the way he had raced towards the scene of the fall, had warned him of what had happened, and he had made his way as quickly as he could to the river-bank.

In half an hour Jimmy was lying snugly in bed in one of the rooms of the farm, wondering exactly what had happened to him. Oddly enough he remembered nothing after he had fallen on the ice, not even tumbling into the water. It was not until later that he knew that he had been very near to drowning, and that it must have been Williams who had rescued him. But Williams had run all the way back to Whyborough to counteract the effects of his own immersion. He had started when Jimmy seemed to be well on the way to recovering consciousness, and had left no message behind him.

CHAPTER XIV.

JIMMY was driven back to Whyborough the next afternoon by the farmer, who had been very kind to him. The school doctor had motored out to see him the evening before, and told him he had had a very lucky escape, and there was nothing the matter with him; but he had better stay in bed the next morning, and get up to dinner if he felt well enough. He had felt quite well enough, and as he sat in the cart wrapped up in one of the farmer's heavy coats he felt rather better, if anything, in body than he had felt the day before.

In mind he was not so comfortable. He felt rather a fool at having had such an accident, and the notoriety that it would bring him among his schoolfellows was not much to his liking. For the second time he had succumbed, and it was at least once too many. He rather dreaded what people would say.

And he did not know at all what to do or say about Williams. You must thank a fellow who had saved your life, but it was difficult to thank Williams, under all the circumstances, and he had no idea how his thanks would be received.

He drove up to Stanhope's just as the other boys were coming back from the last afternoon's skating. He thanked the farmer warmly for his kindness and shook hands with him, when he had handed him back his coat. The farmer had taken a great fancy to him, and invited him to come to tea whenever he felt inclined for a walk. This was in the hearing of Pilling and one or two others who were just coming up to the house.

'I say, Henshaw, you're a lucky young dog,' said Pilling. 'Everybody seems to take to you. How are you after your cold bath, old boy?'

'Oh, I'm all right,' said Jimmy, 'thanks to Williams.'

He had determined to say that, at any rate, when he should be questioned. If he should not be able to thank Williams properly, he would give him the credit that was his due.

He was not prepared for the surprise that his words caused.

'Williams!' exclaimed Pilling. 'Surely it wasn't Williams who lugged you out?'

'Yes, it was. Didn't you know? How did you know what had happened, then?'

'Oh, Stanhope told somebody. He said you'd tumbled into the water, and Sawbones had gone off to save your precious life at a farm. Of course we thought it was the farmer or somebody who had fished you out. Fancy, Williams! My goodness!'

They were now in the hall, and other boys had come in and gathered round Jimmy to hear his story. He told them shortly what had happened, and how Williams had gone in under the ice and rescued him, when he was pretty far gone. What he did not remember on his own account he supplied from what the farmer had told him.

But all interest in his adventure was swamped in the surprise felt at hearing that it was Williams who had been his rescuer.

'I must say it was rather decent of him,' said somebody, rather unwillingly.

'What are you going to do about it, Henshaw?' asked another.

'I'm going up to say thank you,' said Jimmy, and marched out of the room with his heart in his mouth. It was not so easy to brave Williams, even for the sake of saying thank you.

(*Continued on page* 282.)

"He saw who it was that he was holding."

"Pilling, seated comfortably on a bench, applauded the performance."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 279.)

JIMMY knocked at Williams's door and went in. Williams had been 'frowsting' all the afternoon, sitting before his fire with a book. The book was on his knee, but he was not reading when Jimmy came in.

Williams looked up at him, standing just within the doorway, and his face did not change in any way. Jimmy was used to that. Williams had sometimes looked at him like that before, quite mildly and apparently without any interest in him, and had then said something in a quiet voice that had made Jimmy squirm with shame and anger.

He did not say anything now, but looked expectantly for Jimmy to speak.

Jimmy's eyes dropped. 'I've just come back,' he said. 'They told me how you went in and got me out. It was awfully decent of you.'

He stopped, not knowing what to say more, and a red flush crept up over his face as Williams still sat like a sphinx, looking at him and saying nothing. And yet he felt that he couldn't leave it like that. Williams had saved his life, and he was grateful to him, although he did not know how to express his gratitude.

He looked up, and saw that the hearth wanted sweeping. When he had fagged for Williams it had been one of the chief things insisted on, that the hearth should be kept continually swept, probably more because it provided opportunities for complaint than because Williams really minded having a few ashes about. At any rate, he had not troubled to sweep them up himself, now that he had no fag to do it for him.

Jimmy went up to the fireplace, took the little hearth-broom that was by its side, and tidied the grate. Williams said nothing while he did so, but continued to look at him. Jimmy could hardly have told why he did it, but it was really a natural impulse to do something for his preserver just to show that he was grateful to him, even if he could find nothing to say.

When he had finished, he felt that there was nothing more he could do, and prepared to leave the room.

Then at last Williams spoke. He took up the book that had been lying on his knee, almost as if a spell had been broken, but before he returned to his reading of it he said: 'Thanks, Henshaw. I hate to see an untidy grate, but I was too lazy to get up and sweep it myself.'

'Oh, all right,' said Jimmy, turning to go out again.

Williams put down the book once more, as if he had suddenly altered his mind about letting Jimmy go away with nothing settled between them. 'Wait a minute,' he said. 'I have got something to say to you.'

Jimmy stopped, and turned towards him. 'Sit down there,' said Williams, pointing to another basket-chair on the other side of the fire. Jimmy sat down, still rather alarmed, although Williams had never invited him to do so before, in order to give him his peculiar form of talking to. He felt very uncomfortable, and did not raise his eyes from the ground. If he had done so, he might have noticed that Williams's face wore a different expression from any he had ever seen on it before.

Williams cleared his throat, and said in a dry voice: 'Somehow, I find I don't dislike you as much as I thought I did, Henshaw. I suppose one doesn't when one fishes a fellow out of the water.'

Jimmy looked up to find a whimsical smile on his face, which certainly became it a good deal better than the cynical one which was all that usually appeared there. He felt as if a great weight had been taken off his mind. 'I suppose I should have drowned if you hadn't fished me out,' he said.

'The farmer would have done it if I hadn't,' said Williams. 'I'd very much prefer that nothing was said about me in the matter. It didn't amount to anything, and I have no fancy for posing as a hero out of a picture-book. I was going to ask if you think you can oblige me, in return for what I did do, by not bringing in my name at all.'

'I'm sorry I can't do that,' replied Jimmy. 'I've already told some people downstairs, and of course they'll tell everybody else, even if I didn't.'

Williams sighed. 'I'm afraid they will,' he said. 'Well, if people know already that it was I who fished you out, you might let them know that I had no idea it was you who had gone in until I did fish you out. Can you oblige me so far as that, do you think?'

'Yes,' said Jimmy, feeling a little dashed at the request. 'Why are you so keen that people should know that?'

'Well, you see, we haven't been very good friends, have we? We needn't go into the question of whose fault it has been. I only don't want it thought that I was so overcome with remorse that I risked my life to save yours. I didn't do anything of the sort, but that's the kind of story that a young gentleman like your friend Mr. Pilling would put about.'

'All right,' said Jimmy. 'I'll say you didn't know it was me. I shan't say that it wasn't a jolly sporting thing to do, because it was.'

'Thanks, then; I think that's all,' said Williams, returning to his book.

Jimmy went out, not knowing what to think. Williams had been decent to him; there was no doubt about that. But was his decency meant to continue? That was what Jimmy could not decide upon yet. But his feeling of enmity towards Williams had been quite wiped out. He would think no more of what he had done to him.

CHAPTER XV.

On that evening, when Jimmy had run down to the school stationer's, and back again immediately on Williams's errand, he had bucked to Pilling about the extraordinary fastness of his performance. He had felt as if he must have broken all records for such a distance, and although he had been considerably winded during the last part of his journey, he had pounded on at scarcely less speed, and had felt none the worse for it afterwards.

After the trouble with Williams, Jimmy again referred to his late performance. 'It's a funny thing,' he said to Pilling, 'I never knew I could run before.'

'I don't suppose you can now,' said Pilling. 'I'll take you on over a hundred yards, and beat you every time.'

Jimmy accepted this offer. As the Easter term went on regular football began to wane, and the cinder track round the upper field, which was deserted all the winter,

began to be in favour with those who wanted to train for the Sports at the end of the term. The two boys resorted there one afternoon, and raced.

Pilling was lighter than Jimmy, and quicker off the mark. He fulfilled his promise of beating Jimmy in all of the three races they had over the hundred yards track, but he beat him by less in the second race, and by less still in the third.

'You're pulling up, old chap,' he said. 'If we had a dozen races in one afternoon, you'd win the last five of them. You've got more staying power than I have. I'll take you on over the mile after we've had a rest.'

A mile is a big distance for boys of fourteen. Pilling gave it up when he had covered half the course, and Jimmy was plodding on far ahead of him, and looking as if he could continue for ever. He finished the distance in respectable, if not remarkable time; and Pilling, seated comfortably on a bench, applauded the performance.

'You're a miler, Henshaw,' he said, kindly. 'There's no doubt about that. You're a miler. At least you would be if your legs were long enough. Where did you pick it up, old son?'

'Well, I've never run like this before in my life,' said Jimmy; 'I mean on a proper track. But I run whenever I can with the hounds in the Forest, and I've run with bassets, too. You have to keep it up for a long time together there sometimes, and jump things besides.'

'Very well, then,' said Pilling, with decision. 'Now, I'll tell you what we will do, Henshaw. We'll train for the Lower Steeplechase—and, by Jiminy! one of us will win it. We'll begin to-morrow.'

(*Continued on page* 294.)

THE THUMB OF GOLD.

THE following curious statement is made about the Bullhead or 'Miller's Thumb':—

'The head of the fish is smooth, broad, and rounded, and is said to resemble exactly the form of the thumb of a miller, as produced by a peculiar and constant action of the muscles in the exercise of his occupation. It is well known that all the science of a miller is directed so to regulate the machinery of his mill that the meal produced shall be of the most valuable kind that grinding will permit under the most advantageous circumstances. His profit or his loss, even his fortune or his ruin, depend upon the exact adjustment of all the various parts of the machinery. The miller's ear is constantly directed to the note made by the running-stone in its circular course over the bed-stone, the exact parallel of their two surfaces, shown by a particular sound, being a matter of the first consequence; and his hand is as constantly placed under the meal-spout to ascertain by actual touch the character and qualities of the meal produced. The thumb, by a particular movement, spreads the sample over the fingers; the thumb is the gauge of the value of the produce, and hence have arisen the sayings of "worth a miller's thumb," and "an honest miller hath a golden thumb." By this incessant action of the miller's thumb, a peculiarity in its form is produced, which is said to resemble exactly the shape of the head of the fish constantly found in the mill-stream, and has obtained for it the name of the Miller's Thumb.'

SOUR GRAPES.

THERE once was a pussy called Puffy,
With a tail like a fox's, all fluffy.
When asked, 'Where's your ruff?'
She replied in a huff,
'I think a fur collar's quite stuffy!'

M. I. K. CARRUTHERS.

EYES THAT SEE:

THINGS WE OFTEN OVERLOOK.

IX.—ON A WALL.

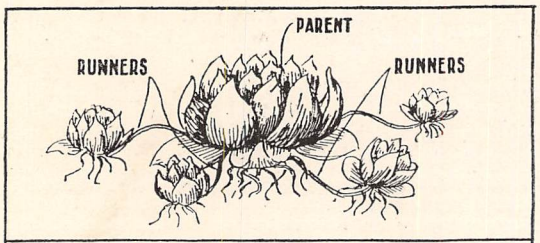
HAVE you ever noticed what a number of interesting plants grow on walls? Besides a large number of plants which have the name 'wall' attached to the other name, there are heaps of flowers, ferns, and mosses which are to be found on walls by those who trouble to look for them. I have long thought upon this subject, and have examined many walls to see what I could find. Of course, you do not expect to find things growing on *new* walls; in fact, the older and more neglected a wall is, the more likely are you to find interesting things on it. When visiting ruins of castles, always keep an eye on the vegetation, for there, for centuries perhaps, the stones have been left to decay, and generations of plants have lived, and died, right out of the reach of the often ruthless hand of the tourist. On the walls of Rochester Castle, for instance, I have seen glorious clusters of Viper's Bugloss in full bloom, and there is not any more, as far as I have been able to discover, for miles around!

Of course, the material of which the wall is built has much to do with the kind of plants that thrive upon it, for this material, in the course of centuries, crumbles, and helps to form the soil in which the seeds come to rest. Ancient castles were generally placed on very exposed positions, for, you know, they were strongholds, and a high position gave advantage to the inmates over any enemies who might attack them. This exposed position makes it possible that seeds may lodge in the crevices of the walls, carried from afar by the wind. It is wonderful to note what large, heavy plants will often develop from quite a tiny crack, and it is also wonderful how these can exist with such an uncertain supply of water. Of course, in parts where there is much rain, naturally the walls are more likely to become overgrown, but almost anywhere there are interesting walls to be found if you look for them.

In a part where the soil is chalky, you will find many flint walls, because the flints are cheap, being largely refuse from the chalk. Now, flint walls have heaps of little nooks and corners, and, if not in too dry a spot, are sure to have 'colonists' sooner or later. In my garden I have a flint wall, and Houseleek, Snapdragon, and Toadflax have planted themselves there, and thrive from year to year. When we have very hot weather, I always turn the hose on to that wall when I am watering the garden, because I should be very sorry to lose my 'Wall Garden,' as I call it! A Houseleek, of course, is a plant that can do with very little water, as it stores up moisture in its fleshy leaves. By the way, have you ever noticed how a Houseleek increases and multiplies? Why, it puts out little families all round itself on runners (fig. 1). Antirrhinum, or Snapdragon, you know, I am sure. Linaria, or Ivy-leaved Toadflax,

is not quite so common. I show it in fig. 2. Its little solitary flowers are purple, and are shaped like a snap-dragon, only they have a spur, you see. This plant sets its own seeds by lengthening the seed-vessel stalk till it can tuck the seed-vessel into a comfortable corner. This very interesting act is well worth examining.

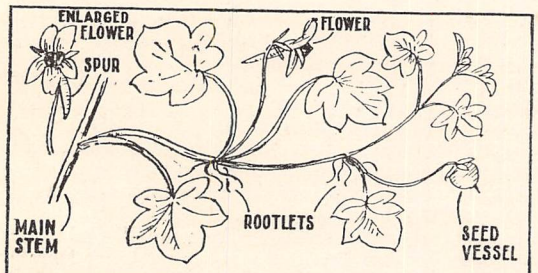
Now, of course, there are a number of plants which have the word 'Wall' as part of their name: Wallcress, Wallflower, Wall Pepper, Wall Rue, Wall Pellitory, Wall Ginger, and so on, but you must not get it into your head that these plants grow *only* on walls; it simply means that they are plants which, with others,



1. HOUSELEEK and FAMILY

are frequently found on walls, they are plants which seem to be able to do with very little soil, so that the seeds take root when they arrive, brought either by the wind or accidentally dropped by birds on the wing.

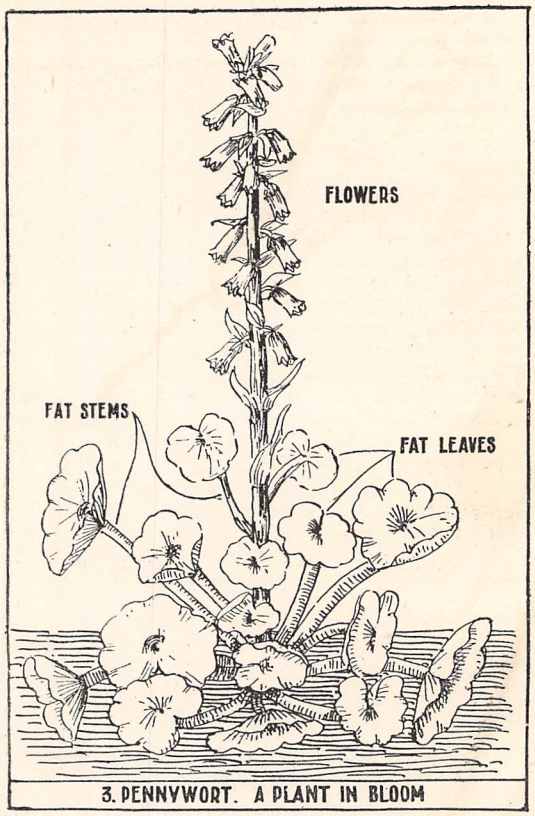
In different parts of the country you find different plants common on the walls; for instance, in Wales no one can fail to notice the hundreds of Wall Pennyworts (fig. 3). They are everywhere. Their groups of stiff, fleshy, round leaves, often called by children Penny Pies, are so unlike those of other plants, and, when in bloom, its very erect spikes of yellow-green bell-shaped flowers are so striking in appearance that no one with eyes could miss them. This plant always seems to me to



2. IVY-LEAVED TOADFLAX (*LINARIA*)

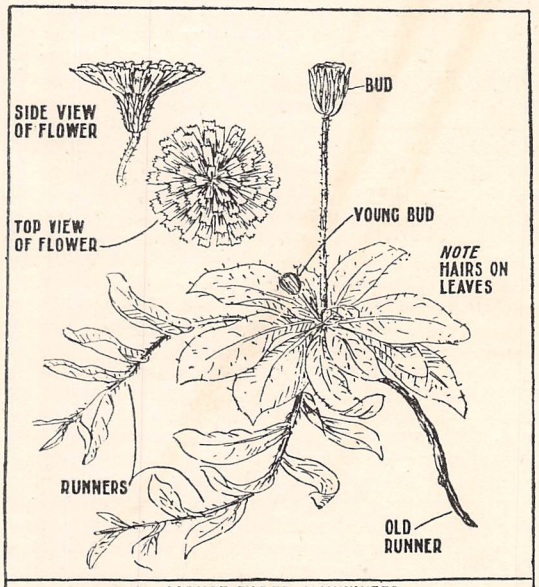
illustrate very well the object of a plant in its life, for in early spring you see its fat leaves develop on fat stalks; later, up come the tall spikes of flowers, perhaps eighteen or twenty inches high; then later again the seeds develop, and, as they mature, you find the leaves are getting thinner and thinner, till they droop and decay, leaving the spike of seed-vessels, which have been developed at the expense of the rest of the plant; so you see the plant has practically given its own life to insure the life of its seeds.

Another frequent plant is Hawkweed; there is a



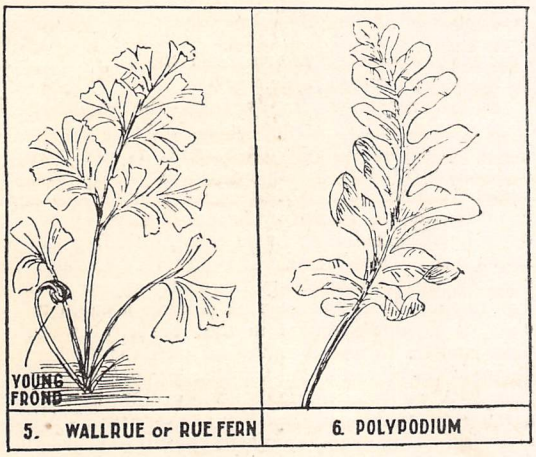
3. PENNYWORT. A PLANT IN BLOOM

Wall Hawkweed, but personally I always find the Mouse-eared Hawkweed much more often than the



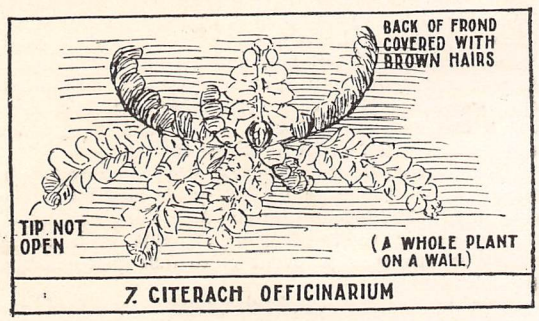
4. MOUSE-EARED HAWKWEED

Wall Hawkweed. Fig. 4 shows you a plant on the wall I am studying. You see how hairy it is; the under sides of the leaves are white with hairs. These leaves are supposed to be like mouse ears, but I cannot say *I* see the likeness! There are ever so many varieties of Hawkweed, but you can always be sure of this one,



because it puts out a sort of runner (see fig. 4). The flower is like a very small dandelion, yellow inside and very often tinged with red on the outside.

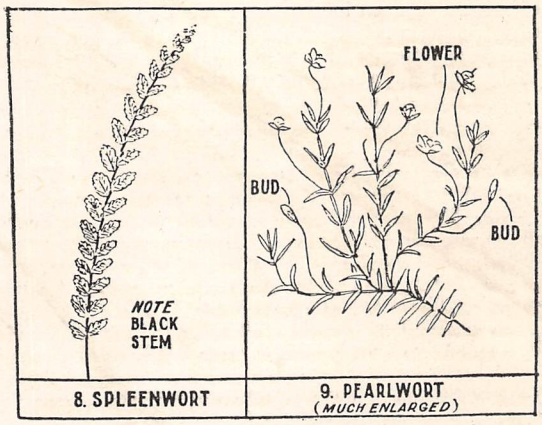
Wall Ginger, Wall Pepper, or Biting Stonecrop (*Sedum acre*) of course you know; a peculiarity of this plant is that the smallest piece will grow, just a leaf or two. Its bright yellow flowers are always a pretty sight when in masses, and it will grow down the face of a wall! It gets its names from the hot taste of its leaves. This wall which I am studying now is in Wales, and here the build of the wall adds to the probability of many plants making it their home. Walls dividing fields, as this one does, are all composed of chunks of rock, just piled up without any mortar, so naturally there are heaps of crevices, making delightful homes for plants. Here are Wall Rue, or Rue Fern (fig. 5), Polypodium (fig. 6), Citerach (fig. 7), Common Spleenwort (fig. 8), all within a few inches of one another. The fronds of



Wall Rue are like a rather coarse kind of Maidenhair. Citerach is coarser still, and the under side of the frond is covered with soft brown hairs. Polypodium is remarkable for its very light colour. Spleenwort is a small fern with black stem, very pretty, and spreading out star-fashion everywhere.

There is a queer little plant here, too, which is worthy of notice, if only for its small size. I refer to Pearl Wort (fig. 9). This plant could easily be mistaken for a moss, for it is so tiny, rarely more than two inches high. Its leaves are very slender, like very fine grass, and its greenish flowers are carried on hair-like stems. Though so tiny, it is noticeable because it grows in tufts, and is of such a bright green. It is sometimes called 'Break Stone,' because it seems to force its way into cracks wherever it gets a chance. If it makes its home in a garden path, there is trouble for the gardener, for it spreads at a terrible rate!

I feel I cannot close this article without at least a few words about our ever-welcome, much-beloved Wallflower. I do not need to illustrate it, because every one knows and loves it! It certainly has earned its name, for it seems to appears always on old walls, and will develop large plants while hanging on by quite a slender root. Its flowers are followed by very long pods—so long that at the end of the season they look like slender leaves. These pods contain a large number of seeds, so there is no wonder that Wallflower, or Gillyflower as the



country people call it, is common. I always think that of all flowers the Wallflower has the heartiest welcome when spring arrives.

Now I think I have told you of the most interesting plants which are common on walls, and I hope you will look out for them when you meet an old wall.

E. M. Barlow.

CURIOUS WEATHER-COCKS.

THE use of vanes, or weather-cocks, is very ancient. Vitruvius, a great Roman architect, who lived in the reign of Augustus, speaks of a vane under the name of 'Triton': probably in his day they often took the form of this sea-god, with his human head on a fish's body, and his conch, or sea-shell horn. In the middle ages the vanes on secular buildings were usually in the shape of banners—a common form to-day—while a cock appeared on church towers. This emblem was said to have been adopted about the middle of the ninth century, in obedience to a Papal decree, which ordered that one of these birds should be set upon every church steeple. A curious Latin poem, written towards the end of the fourteenth century, was intended to explain why the cock appeared on church towers. It is

entitled *Multi Sunt Presbyteri,'* and the opening lines are thus translated :

'Many are the Presbyters
Seeking information,
Why the cock on each church tower
Meetly fits his station!'

Many churches, however, have other designs for vanes. St. Peter's, Cornhill, has the key, symbolical of the saint; St. John's Church, near New Cross, has the eagle, emblem of 'The Beloved Apostle'; St. Lawrence, Norwich, has a very curious vane in the form of a gridiron, with the saint stretched upon the bars—according to tradition, he suffered martyrdom on a gridiron; St. Michael's, Queenhithe, has a spire one hundred and thirty-five feet high, with a gilt vane in the form of a ship in full sail, the hull of which will hold a bushel of grain, in allusion to the former sale of corn at the Hithe; St. Mildred's, Poultry, too, has a gilt ship in full sail on the top of its high tower; the fine old Parish Church of Portsmouth, which is dedicated to Thomas à Becket, has a large gilt ship for a vane, which was presented by Prince George in 1710. The ship is six feet ten inches long: the flag on the main-mast, which works independently as a weather-vane, bears the letters 'M. C. E. S.' The seafaring folk of the town had a curious custom of bringing their children whenever the ship was taken down for repairs, and putting them in the hollow of the ship, hoping to bring them luck.

A quaint vane is seen at Great Ponton Church, near Grantham—it is a copper fiddle. Many years ago a labouring-man, who added to his earnings by playing the fiddle, left his native village, went to America, and made a fortune. He provided funds to rebuild the church, stipulating that a model in copper of his favourite fiddle should be the vane.

St. Sepulchre's Church, Skinner Street, London, has four pinnacles, each bearing a vane. Howell said of it: 'Unreasonable people are as hard to reconcile as the vanes of St. Sepulchre's tower, which never looked all four upon one point of the heavens.'

St. Lawrence, Jewry, has a gridiron vane, and many London churches have a dragon, or griffin; the most famous of these is Bow Church, Cheapside. Mother Shipton prophesied that when the 'Dragon of Bow' and 'The Grasshopper of the Royal Exchange' met, London streets would be deluged with blood! However, the two vanes lay side by side in a stone-mason's yard in Old Street Road in 1820, and no disaster followed their meeting! They had been taken down for repairs. The 'Dragon of Bow,' which is of copper-gilt, and eleven feet long, was brought down from the point of the lofty spire by a young Irishman, who sat on its back, pushing it out from the cornices and scaffolding with his feet, to the admiration of a great crowd of spectators.

The Royal Exchange Grasshopper is also of gilt copper, and is about the same length as the dragon. It was really the crest of Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the first Exchange in 1566. Another large gilt grasshopper formed the sign over the door of his banking-house and goldsmith's shop in Lombard Street, where it was preserved till 1795, when the house (now No. 68) was rebuilt. The ancient civic tradition that a grasshopper saved the life of Gresham, when he was a poor starving boy, lying in a helpless state, by chirping loudly, and attracting a charitable person to the spot, is a pure invention, for his father's letters, which are in the Paston collection, show a seal with a grasshopper. The bell-tower of the second Royal Exchange, which was built in 1669, also had a huge gilt grasshopper vane. This building was burnt down in 1838. At the salvage sale many relics of the old Exchange were sold, but the copper-gilt vane was restored, and now adorns the domed tower of the east front. This great grasshopper is as big as a horse! A church in Fleet Street shows the griffin of the City Arms, and the Temple has the Lamb and Flag for a vane.

Cocks very appropriately form the vanes of the poultry-market in Farringdon Street, and golden dolphins surmount Billingsgate market. These creatures are a favourite sign in seaport towns. One forms the vane at the entrance to Eastbourne Pier, the sea-horse-like 'beastie' of Eastbourne's coat-of-arms appears on several public buildings in the town, including the fine library and Town Hall. The armorial bearings and crests of various towns very frequently appear as vanes. Torquay's badge of a sea-gull, holding a cable in one claw, is a popular design in that beautiful watering-place, and the ox crossing the ford, which is the heraldic device of the City of Oxford, appears on several buildings there. A realistic representation of Southsea Castle surmounts an old curiosity shop in that town. A horse and jockey is the vane on Farlington Racecourse, near Portsmouth, and in all racing and hunting districts, horses, with or without riders, hounds, foxes, and hares are popular. There are several fox-vanes in Buckinghamshire, and one or two round Teignmouth and Dawlish. Horses and hounds surmount various hunting stables and kennels in England and Ireland. Kent is noted for curious animal-vanes. At Shorncliffe there are some very fine fox-vanes, and Reynard also surmounts an oast-house at Orleston, in the centre of the hop country. A very quaint vane, representing a pig with a curly tail, appears above a piggery, near Old Hall Farm, not far from Folkestone. Maidstone has a number of cocks; some very ancient, and bearing queer rhymes and Latin inscriptions on their metal plumage; one is the famous 'Old Church Chanticleer'; the town can also boast of a blue elephant, and two huge and very ugly dragons. A very old cock surmounts the Town Hall at Tonbridge, and when there was a suggestion some years ago to substitute a younger bird, vigorous opposition was made to his removal. A quaint sportsman, in tail-coat, knee-breeches, and tall hat, and attended by a dog, is seen aiming with a gun at an oddly-shaped bird, on an old house in the High Street of that town, and Cheriton has a fine cow-vane. Cattle are popular designs for vanes over dairies, butchers' shops, and markets.

An old name for weather-cocks was 'wind-cocks'—a more suitable title in reality. A queer bird forms the vane of the old Norman Church at Cheasing Eyebright, and, according to local tradition, this cock crows whenever any strange event is to take place in the parish!

Cocks, arrows, banners, horses, hounds, and foxes are popular designs for vanes in Ireland, where fish are also popular. A number of golden fish swing and sway over Cork, the playthings of the wild west winds that sweep over that city from the stormy Atlantic. There is a very fine vane on Shandon Church, which contains the famous 'Bells of Shandon.'

Many English towns and villages claim to possess the

oldest vane. The honour is usually attributed to Ottery St. Mary, Devon, with its curious whistling weathercock. The oddly-named Dorset hamlet of Sixpenny Handley also claims the distinction, as well as Etchingham, Sussex, and Gladestry, Herefordshire. Fotheringay Church, Northants, has a very ancient vane, showing 'the falcon and fetterlock' badge of the Dukes of York.

Many Government buildings possess beautiful and interesting vanes. Woolwich Arsenal has the appropriate design of a gun and gunner. Factories and railway works often show good specimens also. At Newton Abbot there is a well-modelled engine and tender. Portsmouth and Southampton afford many examples, both on public buildings and private houses —ships, boats, horses, anchors, engines, waggons, drays, arrows, fish, birds, bicycles, and aeroplanes—the last a device which is growing rapidly in popular favour.

The making of vanes is an amusing and easy occupation, and as quaint devices can be readily fashioned out of any spare scraps of metal, boys might well employ some of their leisure hours in designing and making curious beasts, birds, and fishes, ships, guns, air-craft, or banners, to 'show how the wind blows!'

MAUD E. SARGENT.

HELD TO RANSOM.

BY V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 274.)

CHAPTER XIV.

FOR a few moments blank astonishment held Dick and Sandy dumb. At last, the elder boy spoke breathlessly. 'Will you—will you say it again? I can't somehow believe it——'

'Is it so difficult to think of me as your father?' The man whom they had known as Langridge spoke rather bitterly.

'No, no; it isn't that!' Dick protested eagerly. 'It's only—oh, you must see what a tremendous surprise it is!'

'Why didn't you tell us before—ages ago?' asked Sandy, perplexedly. 'Because you must have known——'

'Of course I did, from the very first. But I had a great many reasons for not speaking; it isn't possible to explain them all now. Besides . . . you wouldn't understand the chief one.'

'We would try to!' Dick said impulsively.

'I wanted you to like me for myself—before I told you the truth——' the man spoke hesitatingly, in a low voice. 'And besides that, I wanted you to find the treasure for yourselves—if it's there.'

'You thought we'd be disappointed if we didn't, after all our bother?'

'That's about it.'

'It was awfully good of you,' Dick said; and Sandy nodded his head vigorously, only stopping to ask an eager question; 'I say, however did you escape?'

'That's rather too long a story to tell you now. It was during a fight between the tribe that held me prisoner and some other hill Moors. I managed to slip away in the confusion, and took service with Abdul Aziz. I can generally pass as a native pretty easily, you see.' He paused, and then added, rather sadly: 'But I don't think you really believe in me yet, boys.'

'Oh, we do!' Dick cried; but almost in spite of himself, a tiny shade of doubt crept into his voice. 'It's only—it was such a tremendous surprise.'

'Of course; I absolutely understand. Look here, Dick and Sandy, it's up to me to convince you beyond any shadow of doubt, you know. Let's find some certain proof.'

He thought deeply for a moment, then looked up with a sudden light in his eyes. 'I have it! That old book —the one with the story of the treasure——'

'Yes, the one that our fath—that you sent us by Achmet,' Dick nodded.

'The Jew stole it from you, didn't he?'

'Yes, of course he did.'

'Then I couldn't possibly have seen it?'

'Of course you couldn't, unless you are really——'

'Just so! Unless I am really—— Well, I'll describe that book. It is about three inches by four, with a brown leather cover, very much soiled and rubbed. And, let's see, several pages are torn out roughly near the end, and there is a kind of star-shaped black spot on one of the outer covers, near the back.'

'Yes,' Dick nodded emphatically.

'And inside—ask me a few questions about the inside; you told me that you pretty well knew what was written there by heart.'

The boy obeyed, and Sandy, too, entered into the matter, rather as though it were a game, trying mischievously to put catch questions.

After a few minutes, however, Dick drew a long breath. 'It's absolutely certain,' he said, 'you know just as much about it as we do. And—I feel as though we'd been frightfully mean, questioning you like this. I'm sorry if we didn't seem to believe at first—Father!'

The word came half shyly, and the man's face flushed deep crimson under its sunburn. He sat for a moment with his hand shading his eyes, then spoke rather unsteadily. 'Thank you, my boy. I'm afraid I'm not much good at expressing myself. But—well, you'll have to take it for granted that I'm glad——'

The three sat in silence for a few minutes; then Captain Harland spoke in a changed voice. 'And now we'd better hold a consultation, my lads.'

'I suppose you'll have to show them where the treasure is, Father? Anyway, it'll be a sort of a kind of ransom for you,' Dick said resignedly.

'Yes, although I grudge it confoundedly. I'm a wretchedly poor man, you know, my lads; I shan't have a penny if we give up the treasure.'

'That doesn't matter so long as we have you,' said Sandy contentedly, and Captain Harland flushed and laughed rather awkwardly.

'That's a poor sort of investment, I'm afraid,' he said. 'I wish to goodness we could get our freedom and the money too!'

'So do I!' said Dick fervently.

'Let's think of some way, then,' suggested Sandy.

But think as they might, no plan of escape presented itself. Plainly, Mulai Hafid had given orders that they were to be carefully watched, for they could see that several sentries were posted around the door, one of whom entered at intervals, to stand just within the doorway and scrutinise the prisoners intently.

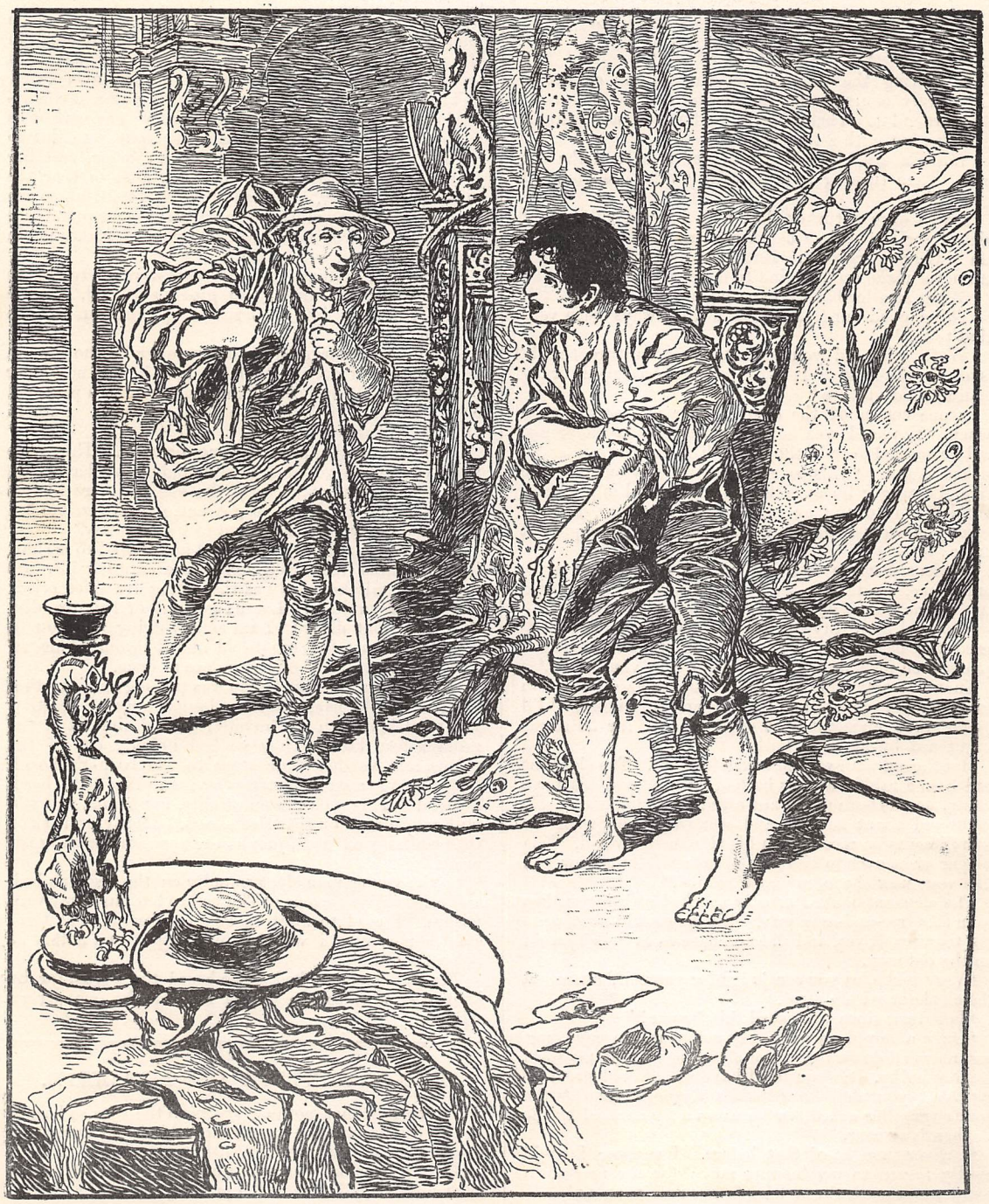
Presently Harland flung himself back upon the straw and closed his eyes. The boys lay down also close beside him, and for some hours the three slept more or less soundly.

(*Continued on page* 291.)

"They were to be carefully watched."

CHATTERBOX.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS



"'Let us get out o this dreadful place without delay.'"

THE PALACE OF VANITY: A LEGEND.

(From the French of MADAME DE GIRARDIN.)

(*Concluded from page* 276.)

ON leaving the dining-room the visitors entered a lovely court paved in mosaic, and with stately pillars round it. There they saw a bird like a vulture in plumage, but with a timid bearing.

'What a stupid looking vulture,' remarked the old man. Then turning to it he said, 'Who are you, old fellow?'

'I was once a turkey, but now I am a vulture. I wished for the change because I was tired of my quiet life in the poultry yard. But I am unhappy here, for I can never make up my mind to devour smaller birds.'

'What smaller birds do you mean?'

'Those good turkeys which have always been very kind to me.'

'Well, why did you wish to be a vulture then?' asked the old man. 'It is far better to be a good turkey than a timid vulture.'

In one corner of the court a bear was seated on a bench. His head was bowed forward upon his breast, and he seemed deep in thought. The beggar said as he looked at him: 'This bear seems strangely out of place here, I'd wager he once had a higher calling.' Then walking up to the animal he asked, 'Bear, tell me what you were before you changed into your present shape?'

'I was a doctor's assistant, and people used to make fun of me,' replied the bear. 'So I wished to be turned into a bear; but I don't like the loneliness of the life.'

'You old fool, why did you leave your own calling?' cried the beggar angrily. 'You might have avenged yourself on men, and poisoned them with your drugs.'

Then the travellers noticed an enormous elephant in an adjoining court, and the beggar exclaimed: 'I'll wager that elephant was once an ant, for he seems frightened by his own bulk.'

But the old man was mistaken for once. The elephant had been a rabbit, and as he had only altered his form lately, he was both proud and awed by its hugeness. He sauntered about heavily, and seemed pleased with the compliments he received on his rise in the world. The beggar went over to him, and asked: 'Tell me how you like your new shape, my good bunny?'

The elephant looked greatly shocked at being spoken to in this free-and-easy way. But he could not manage his trunk well yet, and did not dare to avenge himself on the old man.

'Very much, as you can judge for yourself,' answered the elephant with a strut.

'Is it long since you asked this favour?'

'Only a few days ago. My colour is the same, my ears now fall down instead of standing up, and my form is more bulky. So you see I have not altered greatly.'

'Don't you find your habits changed also?' the young traveller asked, for he was vastly amused by the elephant's answer.

'I never thought of that before. I suppose I could hardly return to my burrow now; for my new form could never pass through such a small opening.'

Both the old man and the young traveller smiled at the reply, and the lackey turned to them saying: 'Would you like to see the beautiful woman now, gentlemen?'

'Yes, indeed, I should,' cried the young traveller eagerly; 'where is she?'

The lackey led the two visitors into a pretty room made of mirrors, where one could admire oneself in the ceiling, walls, and wainscotting. The beautiful woman was lying on a sofa, and the two men gazed at her in horror. Her silken hair was lank and colourless, and her teeth pearls. Her waist was as narrow as a wasp's, so her body looked as if it might snap in two at any moment. Her hands were alabaster, and her feet so tiny that they did not seem able to bear the weight of her body. Instead of being beautiful, as she believed, she was simply hideous. The beggar remarked: 'The very sight of this dreadful creature makes me in love with my old wife again.'

It was now evening, and bedrooms were offered to the strangers for the night, and gladly accepted. So the lackey led them into two rooms opening out of one another.

Being very weary, the young traveller lost no time in undressing, and getting to bed. But he had no sooner touched the silken sheets than he moaned with pain, and cried: 'My skin is being torn from my body. I am in agony. What can it mean?'

Then he looked at the sheets more closely. They were made of the finest Indian muslin, and embroidered with gold spangles, very pretty to the eye, but sore to rest upon. Even the effort to get out of this terrible bed tore his skin, and his arms and feet bled freely.

The beggar had been wiser, and had waited to see how his companion liked his couch before entering his. So he smiled mischievously as the young traveller cried: 'Vanity of vanities! Let us get out of this dreadful palace without delay! I am simply dying for want of sleep! The men here are stupid, and the women hideous. We must leave this horrible palace at once.'

As he spoke the young man was putting on his clothes with such wild haste that the beggar laughed heartily. Angry at his mirth the traveller pushed him out of the room before him. They walked quickly out of the palace, and wended their steps to the beggar's hovel. He pointed to a straw mattress saying: 'This bed is hard, but you can sleep on it comfortably, my friend, and you will not be hurt by spangled sheets. Really, it is sleep that makes good beds, just as the appetite makes good meals.'

So the young man slept soundly on the beggar's bed, and cried in his dreams: 'The palace has cured my vain wishes. I used to want to be an ambassador at Constantinople; now I will be quite happy as a notary at Saint Quentin.'

The old man laughed as he heard the words, for he knew the visit to the palace had taught one person wisdom.

THE INVENTION OF THE KITE.

IT is certain that nothing sharpens the wits so keenly as the presence of danger, and this is no doubt the reason why so many new inventions are always brought forward in time of war, and that we owe some of our most useful appliances to the pressing needs of a critical moment.

Take the case of the kite, for instance, which is one of the most common and popular of playthings all over the world. Its invention dates back as far as the year

300 B.C, and is ascribed to a certain Han Tchin, a general in the Chinese Army, much respected for his wisdom and ingenuity.

A civil war was raging in the country, and it was while besieging the fortified town of Weiang Kough that Han Tchin received orders from his sovereign to find some means of entering the stronghold by stealth, as it appeared to be impossible to do so by fair means.

The general accordingly decided to have a subterranean passage hollowed out, so that a file of warriors might be conducted into the very heart of the city. But it was first of all necessary to find out the exact measurement of the distance separating their camp from the rebel town, from whose ramparts the enemy poured down a perfect hail of deadly arrows and other missiles. What was to be done, and how was the difficulty to be overcome?

Han Tchin's task was no easy one, but he managed to come off triumphant. After some hard thinking, he set to work and made a light frame of bamboo, which he covered with a sheet of paper cut to shape. He then fastened the end of a long roll of string to his apparatus and allowed it to fly in the air until it touched the ramparts. As he knew the depth of the walls, he was easily able to calculate the exact distance by the length of the cord; and the fall of the city was probably due to this simple but ingenious device, known to us by the name of the kite.

After this introduction the kite found such favour with the Chinese that they made a plaything of it, and improved upon its primitive form in the course of time, turning it into a dragon, a flying fish, and other curious shapes. One of these variations is called the musical kite, to the head of which a kind of bow is attached, made of a bamboo stick cleft at both ends and slightly arched by means of a narrow strip of silk or strong paper. This little appliance is adjusted in such a manner that the edges of the silk may meet the wind. When the kite is fairly launched the ribbon begins to quiver and vibrate, and these vibrations produce a deep, sustained note, which varies with the changes of the wind. Indeed, if the kite is allowed to mount very high indeed, the string itself also vibrates like a telegraph wire on a windy day. These musical kites are often attached to pickets in the fields, where they hover over the heads of the labourers digging away in the solitude of their vast plains, and help to wile away their long hours of toil.

C. M.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 287.)

IT must have been past midnight when Sandy started up, clutching at Dick's arm. 'Oh, what was that?' he gasped. 'Something cracked——'

Dick rubbed his eyes violently and saw that his father was sitting upright in the straw, in an intent, listening attitude. He raised his hand to keep the boys silent, and they sat still, holding their breath with excitement.

'Cr-ack!' the sound came again, this time much nearer, to be followed by a series of short, sharp reports. Captain Harland sprang to his feet and stole noiselessly across to the window-place.

After some moments spent in cautious observation, he returned to the boys, and his expression was tense and excited. 'Just as I thought,' he whispered under his breath. 'An attack is being made on this place—evidently by Abdul's men. I can't tell yet how strong they are, but plainly they've driven in Mulai's outposts and forced their way past the outer sentries. They're fighting about the gateway now——'

A volley of crackling shots broke out again, to which Harland listened intently.

'Nearer,' he said softly. 'Look here, my boys, it's no use beating about the bush. This may mean death—and quickly—or, again, it might possibly mean freedom. If there's anything like a general attack we may be able to escape in the confusion; but we mustn't move yet. The sentries are still posted outside.'

A time of anxious suspense followed. The firing drew nearer each moment, and over and above it rose the shouts of men, the thunder of orders, and the shrill neighing of horses. And sometimes, like a dull accompaniment, came the undertone of sobbing groans.

Plainly very fierce fighting was going forward close by, but more than that the prisoners could not guess.

Presently a curious low crackling sound made itself insistently heard; simultaneously a red glow flickered over the filthy cobwebbed ceiling, and Sandy wrinkled up his nostrils. 'Something's burning,' he whispered.

'Something *is* burning!' Harland said grimly. 'And that something's this barn, my lads, neither more nor less.'

'Then—then—hadn't we better get out quickly?' Sandy began.

'Not unless we want to throw away every chance of escape. We may get a chance to make a dash for the gates, if the sentries take to their heels; it's worth waiting for.'

The worst of it was the danger of waiting too long, Dick reflected, as the flames crept along the walls, leaving a snail track of fire behind them, and the choking, suffocating smoke thickened until it was impossible to see more than a few yards away.

The heat increased each moment; the burning air choked the lungs and made the boys gasp and cough, until Harland silenced them with an imperative whisper. '*Be quiet!* Don't make a sound, for your lives!'

Even as he spoke, they heard the door of the prison flung open, and vaguely saw a figure outlined against the ruddy light outside, obscured by rolling clouds of smoke.

A hoarse shout came to them. 'Come out, you prisoners—come out, or you will surely die!'

Again and again the man repeated his order, but Harland lay motionless and silent as death, and signed to the boys to copy him.

After bawling fruitlessly for some moments, the fellow turned to some invisible companion. 'It is certain that they are dead,' the prisoners heard him say. 'It was the good will of Allah that they should be suffocated and save us further trouble. Now go we to the Lord Mulai Hafid and tell him that all three are dead and slain by the fire.'

The two Moors evidently departed, and Harland drew a long breath of relief. He scrambled to his feet and seized Sandy by the arm. Followed by Dick, he stumbled towards the door, one arm crooked over his forehead to shield his eyes.

Gasping and choking, and with no small difficulty,

"He scrambled to his feet and seized Sandy by the arm."

they reached the open air, and found outside a scene of the wildest confusion. All the buildings near, like the one from which they had escaped, were in flames. They almost stumbled over the body of a Moor who lay across the threshold, and others, dead or dying, covered the ground. Knots of men surged to and fro, although the main struggle seemed to be taking place at some little distance, around the building where they had been brought before Mulai Hafid.

(*Continued on page* 303.)

"The English ran after him like mad."

JOHN CABOT.

[This extract from *Twentieth Century Canada* may be of interest to *Chatterbox* readers, who have seen Cabot's name in the articles on 'The Muscovy Merchants.']

THE real discoverer of the North American mainland was John Cabot, a native of Genoa, who, after a fifteen years' residence at Venice, was naturalised as a Venetian citizen in 1476. Owing to the fall of Constantinople in 1453, and the consequent stopping of the old trade routes over which came the spices and merchandise of the East, men were beginning to look across the Atlantic for a possible way towards the East.

He arrived in England probably in the year 1490 or 1491 and settled at Bristol, from which port there was a considerable trade with the fisheries of Iceland.

It is probable he was induced to visit England because he thought that he might cross the Atlantic by a more northerly course than had been attempted hitherto.

It is certain, however, that as early as the beginning of 1496 his plans attracted great attention in London, and possibly in the spring of that year that he set forth on his first voyage to America.

After a voyage across the Atlantic, lasting from May 2nd to August 6th, in a small vessel named the *Mathew*, manned by a crew of eighteen men, Cabot actually reached the mainland, as he thought, of Asia, but, in reality, the coast of America.

On his return to England Cabot became a person of some importance. Hitherto, being a foreigner and poor, he would not have been believed, if his crew, who were nearly all English, of Bristol, had not testified what he said was true.

But the successful accomplishment of his purpose brought him comparative wealth. The King, Henry VIII., gave a present of 10*l.* 'to him that found the new isle,' as well as a pension of 20*l.* per annum, a sum that would be equal to our present currency of about 250*l.* Cabot now appears for a brief season as a person of some importance.

Clad in a new silk doublet and hose, he was lionised during the winter by the rich merchants of London; whilst it is related by Lorenzo Pasqualigo that 'the English ran after him like mad, and indeed he can enlist as many of them as he pleases, and a number of our rogues as well.'

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 283.)

THERE were two steeplechases at Whyborough, laid over the same course, which was a fairly stiff one. For the Lower steeplechase, boys in their first and second Easter terms were eligible; but, as there was no handicapping, entries were usually confined to boys in their second year; in fact, it was considered rather swank for boys in their second term to enter, and only those did so who had already made for themselves a place in the school, such as Henderson.

Jimmy was rather chary of laying himself open to charges of swank, and had picked up quite enough of Whyborough feeling and tradition to know what bring these upon him. 'I don't know about that,' he said, doubtfully. 'I don't suppose I should have any chance of winning it, and I'm pretty certain you couldn't.'

'No; perhaps I couldn't,' replied Pilling, readily. 'I don't think I'll go in. But I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll train you. I'm pretty tired of footer—I want something to do.'

'It's very kind of you,' said Jimmy. 'How would you train me?'

'I'd see that you didn't eat too much pudding, for one thing.'

'I could do that for myself.'

'Oh, no, you couldn't! And I'd take you for runs over the country, and tell you what ditches to jump, and all that sort of thing.'

'I could do that for myself, too,' said Jimmy. 'Still, I should like you to go with me. But I think I'll ask Hender first what he thinks about it.'

Henderson said that he and Scott were both going in for the Lower steeplechase, and he didn't see why Jimmy shouldn't, too, if he wanted to. But, by the way he said it, Jimmy saw that he thought it was a bit pushing of him to suggest it, and began to excuse himself. 'I wouldn't have thought of going in if I hadn't been used to cross-country running at home,' he said.

'I tell you, Hender,' said Pilling, 'he's jolly good at it. I beat him every time over the hundred, but when it comes to a longer distance he has me sitting.'

'I dare say he has,' said Henderson. 'All right, Henshaw. Scott and I are going over the course next week. You can come too, if you like.'

'I'll come,' said Jimmy, 'and I'll ask you again when we've finished it whether you think I ought to go in. If you say no, I won't.'

They went over the course, and at the end of it Henderson said: 'Lots of people will say it's cheek, I suppose; but if I were you I should go in, Henshaw.'

Jimmy now had something definite to train for. It was an immemorial understanding, though not a written rule, that boys might go over the steeplechase course, or any part of it, once, and once only, before the race itself. But there were other places in which they could practise different jumps and different kinds of ground, and the cinder-track itself provided a great deal of the training. When Jimmy was not running in the afternoons, he was diligent in his attendance at the gym. He looked a very different boy, hard and well tuned-up, at the end of his first two months of school-life from the one who had come to Whyborough at the beginning of the term.

And he had learnt to box. That fact turned out to be rather important.

CHAPTER XVI.

It can hardly be said that discipline was well maintained in Lower Fourth after the events already narrated. Discipline would never be well maintained in any form of which Mr. Ringrose was master. But it was now possible for those who wanted to work to do so, and those who didn't want to work carried on their various amusements in a much quieter fashion than before. The Head Master paid one or two surprise visits to the Form-room, and fortunately found nothing to complain of. Though on each occasion, if he had

come in a little earlier, he might not have gone out again without having inflicted a few punishments. That was purely luck, but it made the rowdy spirits more careful. Mr. Ringrose had an easier time than before, and those who were so amiably anxious that he should gain his position as Sixth Form master quite hoped that his chance was not lost.

But he was still 'rotted' by a few, and the rotting was not so purely impersonal as it generally is when boys allow themselves liberties with an incompetent master. It was actually ill-natured on the part of some and must often have made the poor little scholar feel degraded and unhappy. He was openly referred to as 'Johnny' by those who disliked him, and even by some others, and sometimes as 'Johnny Ringdove.' It was made known to him that his mother's having been 'only a matron' was the common property of the Form and the School. This sort of thing was discouraged by the boys of gentlemanly feeling, who were of course in the majority; but there are always some in every collection of boys, or men either, who cannot learn that no position in the world is low or mean in itself, and to those of this sort at Whyborough it remained a cause of reproach and contempt to Mr. Ringrose that his mother had worked for her living and for his.

One of these boys was Norman, whose parents, far from being able to claim the ancient descent attributed to him in fun, were entirely self-made. Norman's grandfather had been a navvy, and his father a small contractor, who had made a great deal of money. This was all to his credit, but hardly gave Norman himself the right to turn up his nose at Mr. Ringrose. Furthermore, he had nothing to do with Lower Fourth, and might reasonably have been expected to leave Mr. Ringrose alone altogether. But he would lie in wait for him going in and out of school, and insult him within hearing of other boys, just for the pleasure of it, and also for the pleasure of annoying Jimmy, to whom he had taken a great dislike.

Jimmy was not particularly distressed by Norman's behaviour on his own account. He was getting ready to deal with him, and the more offence he gave, the greater pleasure it would be to down him when the time came. But he did feel unhappy about the way in which Mr. Ringrose was treated, because he thought that both he and his mother might put a good deal of it down to him. He worked hard and never made the slightest disturbance in Form—behaving himself indeed with a good deal more quietness than he would have thought necessary if he had not wanted to show Mr. Ringrose that he was free of offence towards him. But he felt, somehow, that Mr. Ringrose was displeased with him, although he never did or said anything to show it, and it could only have been for the one reason.

One afternoon Jimmy, Henderson, Scott, and Pilling were jogging along home after a training run across country. With heads up and elbows squared they took the road to Whyborough, intending to keep it up for the last mile, and end with whatever sprint should be left in them. Unfortunately, Jimmy got a stone in his shoe just as they were approaching the outskirts of the town, and had to stay behind to take it out. When he had done so, the others were a long way ahead, and he started off again by himself.

He had just got into his stride again when he saw in the road in front of him the figure of a little old lady, which he immediately recognised to be that of Mrs. Ringrose. He could not very well pass her without recognition. He had a momentary impulse to do so, or else to keep behind her at a walk until she should turn in at Jasmine Cottage, which was not far distant. But he put the impulse away from him, and ran on until he caught her up, when he stopped, took off his cap, and said, 'How do you do, Mrs. Ringrose?'

The old lady peered at him through her spectacles, and said, 'Oh, it's you, Henshaw! How do you do? You have not been to see me lately, as I hoped you would. But perhaps I am rather glad you have not been to see me, for I don't think you have behaved nicely. No, I don't think you have behaved nicely at all, and I did not think it of you, when I and my son made you so welcome in our little house.'

Jimmy was much downcast by this speech. 'I'm very sorry, Mrs. Ringrose,' he stammered out. 'But it isn't my fault.'

'Oh, then you know what I am referring to,' she said, taking him up sharply. 'The idea of a pack of schoolboys—*lower* schoolboys—calling my son "Johnny," and worse than that! I've heard them do it—*he* wouldn't have told me. I have heard them when I was waiting for him to come out of chapel, and I should have liked to give them a bit of my mind about it. I call it *disgraceful*, and I know that it could only have come from you, Henshaw, because no other boy knows that I call my son "Johnny," and I should never have *dreamed* of doing that to you if I had not thought that you were a nice-feeling boy and a gentleman. I am ashamed of you, Henshaw, and so would Mr. Spedding be, if he knew how you had behaved. *He* would never have acted in that way.'

She was evidently very much upset. Her frail small figure trembled with indignation as she spoke, and the feathers in her bonnet shook.

Jimmy, naturally enough, had had no experience as to how to treat some one very much older than himself who was in this condition; but he knew what he had to do. He had not only to excuse himself, but to calm her. It was a test of character how he would do it.

'I know that a lot of people are very rude to Mr. Ringrose,' he said. 'But I'm not. You were very kind to me when I came to see you, and so was he. I've never done anything since to worry him in Form, and I've asked other people not to, too.'

'Oh, I know you have acted like a good boy yourself,' said the old lady, not without scorn. 'He has told me that. But it doesn't make it any better, you know, Henshaw, if you set others on to do what you would be ashamed of doing yourself. *I* think it makes it rather worse, myself.'

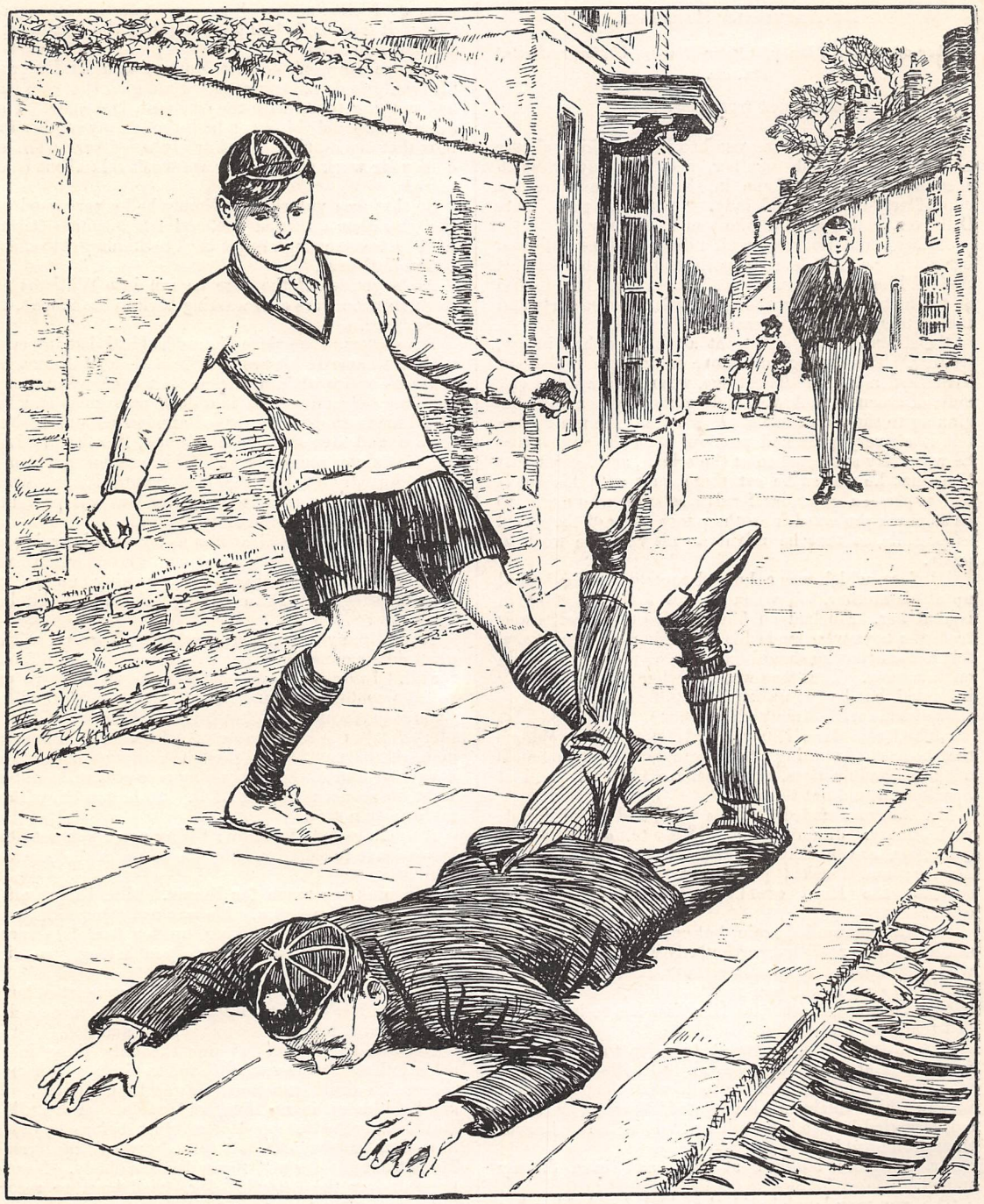
'Well, it would,' said Jimmy. 'But I haven't done that, Mrs. Ringrose. If people call him by his Christian name—well, of course they know his name is John. I didn't tell them what you call him.'

'Do you mean to tell me that truthfully?' she asked, looking him straight in the face, as if she would drag the truth out of him at any cost.

'Yes, I do,' said Jimmy, meeting her gaze with his own. 'I didn't tell anybody anything, except how kind you had been to me, and that he had been decent to me too. And I told one or two that we ought not to rag him so much, because he wanted to be Sixth Form usher—I mean master, and the Head wouldn't have him if he knew he couldn't keep order.'

(*Continued on page* 298.)

"The old lady peered at him through her spectacles, and said, 'Oh, it's you, Henshaw!'"



"Norman tripped over the exterded leg, tried hard to recover himself, but went sprawling."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 295.)

JIMMY and Mrs. Ringrose had been walking slowly along the road together, and had now reached Jasmine Cottage. 'Come in, Henshaw, and have a cup of tea,' said the old lady. 'You have time before Call-over, and I should like you to see my son.'

Jimmy could not very well refuse, and he followed her down the little garden path and into the cottage. She led him straight into the sitting-room, which looked as comfortable as ever, though it was not yet dark, and the curtains were not drawn.

Mr. Ringrose was sitting at a table by the window, writing. The setting sun shone on the quiet, pleasant little garden behind the cottage, where there was a gay mass of crocuses in flower, and points of green were beginning to show on some of the shrubs. He must have felt it all very quiet and peaceful after the annoyances he was daily subjected to at the school, and looked just like what he was as he sat there busy with his books and papers—a quiet, inoffensive scholar, who ought to be as much protected from the rough ways of the world as possible, so that he might do his valuable work in peace.

His face, which was calm and contented as he looked up at his mother, fell when he saw Jimmy coming in behind her. He had an hour or two to himself away from the boys who made his life a burden to him, and felt it hard that he should have one of them brought in on him now. That was what his changed look clearly indicated, but he got up from the table and prepared to shake hands with Jimmy all the same.

'John,' said Mrs. Ringrose, 'Henshaw has told me that he has had nothing whatever to do with the rudeness of those horrible boys, and I believe him. A pupil of Spedding would not tell a lie."

Mr. Ringrose smiled at this speech, and shook hands with Jimmy. Jimmy said: 'I didn't tell anybody anything, sir, except that you wanted to be Sixth Form Master; and I asked people not to—not to rag you, so that the Head couldn't say you couldn't keep order.'

Mr. Ringrose smiled again, but not very broadly. His sense of humour was not particularly well developed. 'I wish you hadn't told them anything, Henshaw,' he said. 'Still, I've no doubt you meant kindly. We'd better have tea at once, Mother, as Henshaw has to be back in less than half an hour.'

Evidently he did not want to refer to the matter further. But Mrs. Ringrose did. 'I believe Henshaw when he says he had nothing to do with the disgraceful way in which you have been treated,' she said. 'And I am very glad he has had nothing to do with it. I never thought he had.'

Mr. Ringrose laughed at this, and even Jimmy smiled.

'Ah, you may laugh,' said the old lady, shaking her head. 'But it is no laughing matter. *You* would never have told me about it, Johnny—there! I have let it out; but I know Henshaw—no, I will call him Jimmy—won't tell. But I have heard some of it myself; and have been told more by Mr.—well, I won't mention names. I should like Jimmy to tell the other boys that if it goes on I shall go straight to the Headmaster, and tell him about it.'

'I hope you won't do that, Mother,' said Mr. Ringrose. 'It wouldn't do me any good. I am glad that you have had nothing to do with the rudeness, Henshaw. I am afraid that I did think you had, though my mother says now that she didn't. You have behaved very well, and done your work well. Now we won't talk about it any more.'

So that was put right. Jimmy had a very good tea, though rather a hurried one, and left Jasmine Cottage with just time enough to get back to Stanhope's to change before Call-over.

As he got out of the gate he ran into Williams and Norman, who were also walking back to Stanhope's, at a smart pace.

It was some time since Jimmy had had that interview with Williams in his room. Since then Williams had taken no notice of him, except that once when Jimmy had knocked against him in a dark passage he had first of all made an exclamation of annoyance and grabbed at him, and then said: 'Oh, it's you, Henshaw! Look out where you are going to.' This was not much to go upon, but Jimmy had the idea that Williams would have liked to be friends with him, but was prevented from making any advances by his pride.

Williams just looked at him as he came hurrying out of the gate, and then walked on. But Norman said: 'Hullo! here's Henshaw been sucking up to the Ringdove again! Been having tea in the kitchen, Henshaw?'

Now Jimmy was about ready for Norman, with a great deal against him that he wanted to work off, once for all. In ordinary circumstances he would have provoked a conflict then and there. But he was unwilling to do so in the presence of Williams. Norman had given him exactly the same cause of offence as Williams had done in the past, and although Williams had left off badgering him in that disgusting sort of way, he did not want to arouse memories of it. So he ran on, without taking any notice.

Norman called after him: 'Why don't you get Stanhope's leave to ask Mrs. Ringrose to tea in the Servants' Hall?'

This was too much for Jimmy. Mrs. Ringrose had been kind to him again. He was not going to hear her sneered at without sticking up for her. He turned round and said: 'That's where you belong, you dirty cad!'

It was not, perhaps, a very sparkling repartee, but it had the effect of enraging Norman. He made a dash forward, and Jimmy took to his heels and fled.

Norman could run. It was the only thing in the athletic line that he could do, and as his legs were much longer, he could run much faster than Jimmy. He caught him up in no time, and made a grab at him. But Jimmy had stopped short just before he would have been caught, and half turned towards his pursuer. He put out his leg and threw back his body. Norman tripped over the extended leg, tried hard to recover himself, but went sprawling full length upon the pavement. Then Jimmy took to his heels once more, and this time he was not pursued.

(*Continued on page* 309.)

OLD WILLOWS.

A VERY familiar tree—we might say a favourite one with most of us—is the willow, so common near rivers and streams, where we often see lines of its 'shockheads,' as Tennyson calls them, with their trunks curiously slanted and twisted. It is not a tree to afford us the shade we get from the loftier kinds, with larger and more clustering leaves, but the willow is pleasant to look upon, and the soughing of its foliage in the summer breeze is agreeable to the ear. Have we not, too, some of us, gone out on a cold March or April day eager to find branches of willow covered with the early white or yellow blossom, which was greeted as 'palm,' and carried joyously home for Easter decoration? Seldom does a willow tree attain to any great age. The wood is soft; rain enters it, insects attack it, and the trunk becoming hollow the tree is likely to fall in some high wind. I have seen some, however, that have battled through many years along the Thames, the Lea, and the New River. The most ancient tree of all I came upon in Springhead Gardens, near Gravesend—a hoary monster, with a big branch nearly the size of the parent stem.

Along rivers, the farmers usually 'pollard' this tree, so that it forms large heads, which in time get more or less hollowed, and the space, being filled up with earth and moss, brought gradually by the winds, a variety of seeds fall upon the tops and grow. Of course, there are young willows springing from the seeds of the tree, but it is not uncommon to see small oaks, hazels, hawthorns, ashes, and other species growing upon the willow-heads, with a variety of wild flowers in summer. Sometimes a couple of willows that are getting into years bow their heads towards each other, and the boughs mix, forming a tangle. Occasionally, we notice a willow that is quite a shell, being hollow to the ground, but it lives and thrives because the trunk sends out roots which, clinging fast below, enable it to battle with frost or wind for years. Sometimes a fallen willow makes a convenient bridge over a streamlet, or, lying on the brink of a river, one of these trees makes a pleasant seat, handy to anybody who may be fishing. Many a willow that has fallen still grows; now and then we see one with quite a crowd of twigs springing from all parts of the trunk. Occasionally a willow that happens to be growing close to the bank of a stream, has the roots washed bare on one side. This does not appear to matter, for the roots become leafy and form fresh stems. Then, inside an aged willow a new tree may be observed to grow up, filling up nearly all the hollow space. Another curious thing about some of the old willows is that their wood is black, and looks as if they had been burnt. This is supposed to be merely the effect of the sun upon the decaying wood.

J. R. S. C.

JOHN TRAVERS CORNWELL, V.C.

SHIP by ship took its place on the line,
The gunners ready with shot and ball.
The British Admiral gave the sign:
'Engage the enemy hotly, all!'*
Every man took his place by his gun,
And by his gun at his place stood he:
The brave, the fearless, the dauntless one—
John Travers Cornwell, the Boy V.C.

* Sir David Beatty's battle order.

Over the wave the guns boomed loud:
Death and terror were in their breath,
Still he stood there, erect and proud,
A British boy, but true till death.
'Mortally wounded' there he stood,
Ready to die if death must be.
On to the deck his life-blood flowed,
John Travers Cornwell, the Boy V.C.

Ten were the crew of the gun that day:
All but two of the ten had died.
Vessel at vessel thundered away,
Still must he at his post abide.
Still must he in his place stand fast,
England expects it—England shall see
There at his post, though he be the last,
John Travers Cornwell, the Boy V.C.

Over the land the message came,
The noble deed that he had done;
Lip unto lip passed on his name,
The boy that stood beside his gun.
Brave hearts did homage to one more brave,
Dear God, our pride that such things may be—
That hearts like his still rule the wave—
John Travers Cornwell, the Boy V.C.

Keep back the tear if it should rise,
Gulp down the sob within the throat.
Only let pride be in the eyes,
Only upon his glory doat!
Among the bravest place his name,
Peerless among the peerless be;
Then leave him alone with his glory, fame—
John Travers Cornwell, the Boy V.C.

FRANK ELLIS.

A JOURNEY TO GO.

III.—FROM BRISTOL TO PENZANCE.

AFTER leaving grey, smoky Bristol behind us, we are carried into Somersetshire once more, and now we find ourselves in a wonderland where all the old legends and fairy stories seem to become fresh and true. For this is Arthur's country, and from Caerleon over on the other side of the Severn Sea down to the Land's End, beyond which lies the mysterious drowned realm of Lyonesse, there are names and folk-lore everywhere to remind us of the greatest of all romances.

To the south, as we travel westward, is the village of Queen's Camel, with the great entrenched camp of Cadbury on the hill above; and Cadbury, so one legend says, is Camelot, where, long ago, King Arthur held his court, and from whence he and his Knights of the Round Table sallied out on their marvellous quests.

The country people of the district tell how, to this day, on nights of full moon the king and his warriors ride round the camp and water their silver-shod steeds at Arthur's Well. Leland, an old sixteenth century writer, declares in support of this tale that a silver horse-shoe was once found near the magic spring.

This we may believe or not, as we like, but certain it is that a grass-grown track running from Cadbury in the direction of Glastonbury is still called 'King Arthur's Hunting Causeway,' and, as for Glastonbury itself, the whole place is like a chapter out of the *Morte d'Arthur*. The great abbey stood in the Isle of Avalon. It was here that Joseph of Arimathæa came bearing the Holy Grail, it

was here that his miraculous hawthorn-staff grew and blossomed on Christmas Day, and it was here that the hero, King Arthur and his wife, Guinevere, were secretly buried.

Now only the ruins of Glastonbury remain, but the hawthorns still bloom in the spring—and perhaps on Christmas Day as well—and in autumn the apple-trees of the Apple Island are still weighed down with their loads of rosy fruit.

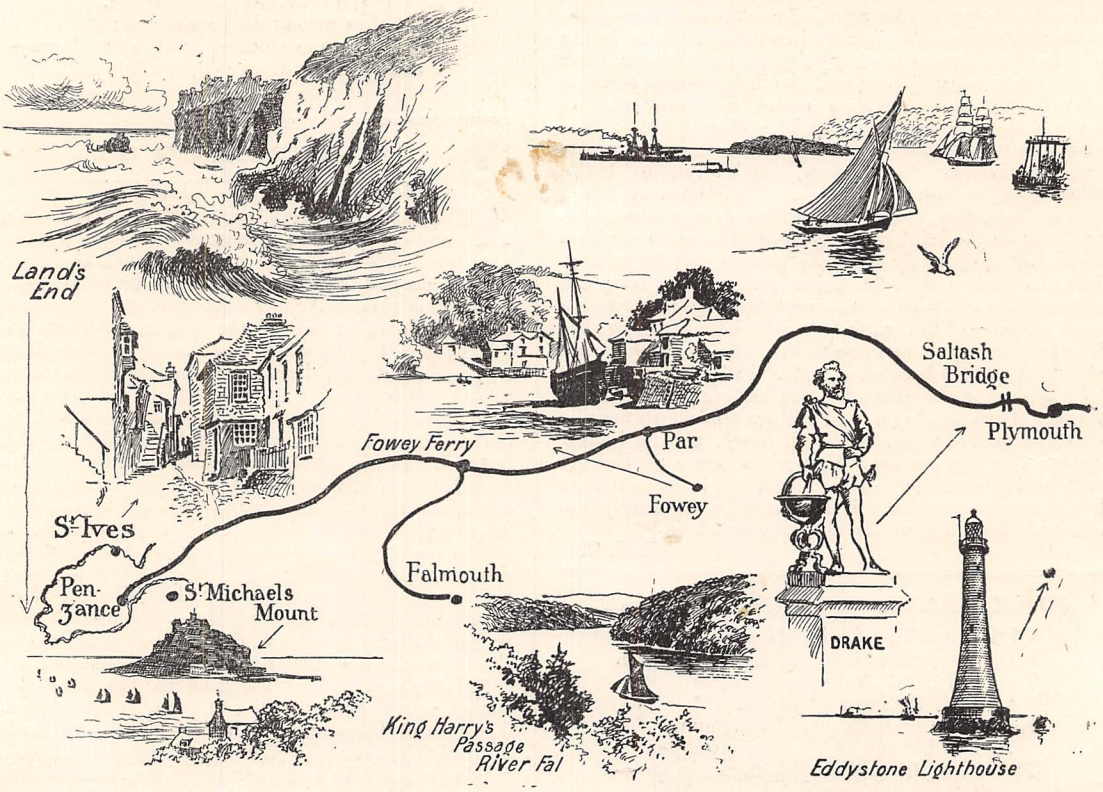
But it is not only the great Arthur legend that the West Country whispers to us as we travel through its orchards, for ahead are the highlands of Exmoor, where, once upon a time, stalwart John Ridd met Lorna Doone beside the Bagworthy Water; and on beyond Westward Ho! again, there is Devonshire, with Amyas Leigh on the quay at Bideford, staring at the wonderful carved buffalo-horn that Oxenham had brought from the Azores, and Appledore Cove, where the *Vengeance* rode at anchor, with the body of Salvation Yeo on board and her flag flying at half-mast.

We must go back now, out of the realm of fiction, into the sterner world of history, for about an hour after leaving Bristol we reach the flat plain of Sedgemoor, where Monmouth and his peasant soldiers were defeated among the wide ditches, or rhines, which still can be seen cutting across the meadow-land. Just beyond the battle-field is Bridgewater, where the unfortunate duke had his camp, and then we come to Taunton, where, on his first landing in England, he was welcomed and treated as a king.

There is a story-book called *The Oak Staircase*, which describes those festive days, and tells how a bevy of enthusiastic little schoolgirls, the 'Maids of Taunton,' clad in white and with wreaths of flowers on their heads, presented a Bible and a banner worked with the Royal Arms to the handsome young leader, whom they were bidden to hail as the champion of religion and freedom. It must have been a picturesque scene that took place in the old West-country town on that June morning when the children presented their offerings and every man wore a sprig of green in his hat.

The rejoicings did not last for long; the revolt ended in disaster and the hero-worshippers were cruelly punished, for during the August of that same year the terrible 'Bloody Assize' was held, and in his scarlet-hung court-house Judge Jeffries meted out fines, imprisonment, and death with a heavy hand. Even the innocent little maidens of Taunton did not escape punishment, and more than one of them paid for that midsummer merrymaking with her life.

From Taunton we journey on to Exeter, the chief town of Devonshire, and here find memories of a more successful rebellion, for in 1688 William of Orange entered the city, and was welcomed with rather half-hearted enthusiasm, for the people remembered the events of three years before, and the swift retribution that had followed their misplaced loyalty.



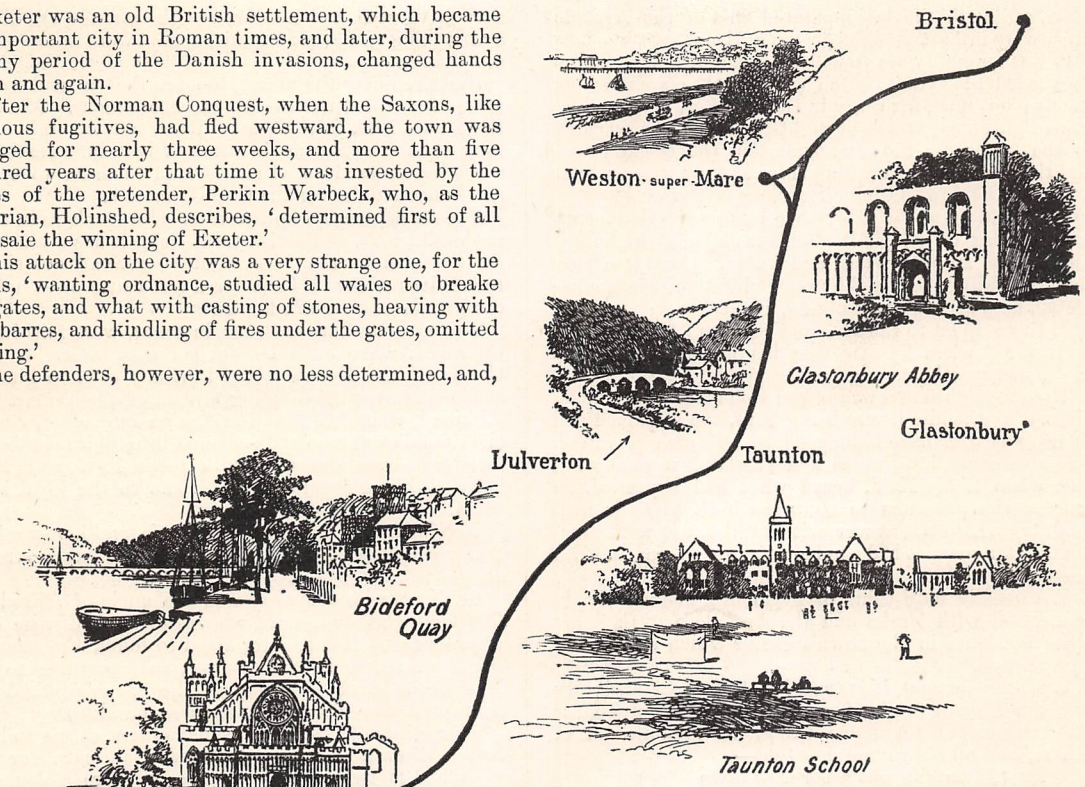
A Journey to go—from Bristol to Penzance. *The journey begins at the top of the next page.)*

Exeter was an old British settlement, which became an important city in Roman times, and later, during the stormy period of the Danish invasions, changed hands again and again.

After the Norman Conquest, when the Saxons, like previous fugitives, had fled westward, the town was besieged for nearly three weeks, and more than five hundred years after that time it was invested by the forces of the pretender, Perkin Warbeck, who, as the historian, Holinshed, describes, 'determined first of all to assaie the winning of Exeter.'

This attack on the city was a very strange one, for the rebels, 'wanting ordnance, studied all waies to breake the gates, and what with casting of stones, heaving with iron barres, and kindling of fires under the gates, omitted nothing.'

The defenders, however, were no less determined, and,



bringing faggots to the inner sides of the gates, they set them alight, too, and thus, as the chronicler writes, 'By fire was the city preserved from fire,' and there was time for 'trenches and rampires' to be constructed.

Exeter experienced another siege during the strange religious revolt in the reign of Edward VI., and on that occasion the citizens were nearly forced to surrender by lack of food. However, they held out bravely, relief came, and the town was rewarded by the king for its loyalty and hardihood.

After leaving Exeter, the railway carries us southward, over Dartmoor, which is one of the wildest districts in the whole of England, for there strange ruins of British dwellings and sheepfolds are to be seen, magic forests of stunted oaks grow, and, according to the folk legends, pixies still hide their fairy gold beneath the tors, lure travellers into danger, and have to be propitiated with offerings of pins.

Beyond the moor is Tavistock, where Prince Charles, afterwards Charles II., spent some dreary wet days while his father's army was besieging Plymouth, and where Ordulph, the famous Saxon champion and giant, is said to be buried, a man who, tradition tells us, could stride across a ten-foot river, and who once tore open the city gates of Exeter with his bare hands.

A still greater champion, and one whom all Devonshire will never cease to reverence, lived near Tavistock, and that was Sir Francis Drake, whose sword and drum are still preserved in his old home, Buckland Abbey. The house was built by Drake himself, on land given to him by Queen Elizabeth, but 'The Old Warrior,' as the Devon men call him, was not destined to end his days there. With the echo of Drake's drum sounding in our ears, we must follow him to Plymouth, where his statue stands on the Hoe, lookout across the Western Ocean towards Nombre de Dios Bay.

'Yonder lumes the island, yonder lie the ships.' Many changes have taken place in the last three hundred years, but it is not difficult to picture the grass-grown hill as it must have been on that famous August afternoon when Drake played at bowls, and finished his

game, although the huge, painted sails of the Armada ships were almost in sight on the horizon.

It was an empty sea to which Drake looked out, when he shaded his eyes to catch sight of the approaching enemy; but now, far away in the distance, is the Eddystone lighthouse, which at night-time flashes a warning to the warships, the merchantmen, the ocean liners, and the white-winged sailing ships as they pass on their ways up and down Channel.

The building of the Eddystone was no simple matter, for the rock on which it stands is exposed to the full force of the Atlantic winds and waves. There was more than one failure before the present lighthouse was completed, and, after stormy nights, its architect, Smeaton, used to go up on to the Hoe and exclaim: 'Thank God it is safe,' when he saw that his great oak-tree-like tower had weathered another tempest.

The first lighthouse was begun soon after the Armada victory, and, while it was being built, the workmen and their tools were once kidnapped by a French privateer. The two countries, France and England, were at war; but, when Louis XIV. heard what had happened, he ordered the prisoners to be taken back to their own land, saying, 'I am at war with armies, not with mankind.' Our enemies had good manners in the seventeenth century.

We usually only think of Plymouth, historically, in connection with Drake and the Armada, but there are other incidents in the town's career which should not be forgotten.

The place cannot, it is true, boast of great antiquity or claim Roman origin, for in the time of Henry II. it was considered 'A mene thing, an inhabitation of fishers,' and an old rhyme says that—

'Plympton was a borough town
When Plymouth was a furzy down.'

However, the town soon grew in importance, and in 1287 we hear that the Duke of Lancaster sailed thence to France with a fleet of one hundred and twenty-five ships.

This warlike visit was soon returned, and the town was several times burnt and plundered by the French; but in 1355 the tables were turned again, and it was to Plymouth that Edward the Black Prince returned in triumph after the battle of Poitiers, with the French king as his prisoner of war.

Later on came the great days of adventure and discovery, and Richard Grenville, Humphrey Gilbert, and Walter Raleigh all sailed out of Plymouth. It was there, too, that Queen Elizabeth came to welcome Drake, when his ship, the *Pelican* (renamed the *Golden Hind*) had returned to port after her three years' voyage round the world.

In the seventeenth century Plymouth gained new renown, for it was then that the Naval dock-yards were built, and a town sprang up on the Hamoaze, which at first simply called 'Dock' was, in 1824, given the name of Devonport.

And now we must cross into Cornwall, our train carrying us over Saltash Bridge, which spans the river Tamar, once the boundary between Saxon and Celtic lands. On the left is Mount Edgecombe, which, it is said, the Spanish Admiral of the Armada intended to claim as his share of the booty, supposing the great adventure had met with success.

Cornwall, after beautiful Devonshire, seems a wild, dreary country, well fitted to be the last stronghold of a fugitive race, and here we see the strange cromlechs and rocking stones that tradition says were altars of the old Druids.

Scattered over the moors, too, are the tin and copper mines for which Cornwall was once famous. Many of these date back to very early times, and it is said that, long before the Roman invasion of Britain, Phœnicians and Greeks used to visit the land in order to barter their merchandise for the Cornish metals.

The Royal Duchy, however, has had its share in more modern history, and a disastrous share it has often been, for the men of the West Country have always shown themselves ready to fight for a lost cause or to uphold the banner of a forlorn hope.

The men of Cornwall, for instance, were faithful to Charles I. when even Devon had cast in its lot with Cromwell, and Royalists and Puritans used to glare at each other over the dividing stream of the Tamar. At Liskeard, which we pass through on our journey west, the Roundheads who had ventured into their neighbours' territory were defeated with great loss, and King Charles himself paid several visits to the loyal little town.

Not far from Liskeard is St. Neot's, and here we hear strange stories of one of Cornwall's many strange saints.

St. Neot, who some say was the uncle of Alfred the Great, was a holy hermit, who, after he had gone on a pilgrimage to Rome, determined to found a monastery. Food was scarce in the country, so (according to the legend) the saint's guardian angel every day placed two fishes in a sacred well near the new building.

This saint, like St. Francis and others, seems to have had a marvellous power over wild animals, for one legend tells us that, when his oxen were stolen, deer came out of the forest of their own free will to replace them, and another tale is that while the monastery was in course of construction, heavy stones were brought to the spot by a team composed of two stags and a hare.

From Liskeard we go on to Bodmin, where the pretender, Perkin Warbeck, set up his Royal Standard, and then, still further west, is Falmouth, with Pendennis Castle, that stood firm for King Charles when every other Cavalier stronghold, except Raglan, had fallen.

Not far away from Falmouth is Helston, where on the 8th of May every year a curious merry-making takes place. This is the Furry Dance, and, to the giddy strains of a strangely haunting tune, the inhabitants of the village, with flowers and green boughs in their hands, dance through the streets and in and out of the houses.

Some say that the music and dance have a Celtic origin, but others believe it to be a survival of some Greek or Roman holiday in honour of the Goddess Flora, and that the first Furry dance festival was celebrated long ago in Cornwall by visitors from the sunny shores of the Mediterranean.

We are coming to the end of our long journey now, and here is Penzance, the only spot in all England where the dreaded Spaniard ever landed as enemies. The invasion, if it can be given so grand a name, took place in 1593; but it did not last for long, and, after burning parts of Penzance and Newlyn, the Spaniards went back to their galleys and sailed away.

Beyond Penzance is the Land's End, and beyond that again, legend says, Lyonesse lies beneath the waves of the Atlantic; and far away in the West lies the New World.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 292.)

CAPTAIN HARLAND made straight for the wall which enclosed all the buildings. In its shelter they came to a momentary standstill, whilst a group of men rushed past them, brandishing torches and weapons, and shouting fiercely.

'It's a pretty big attack,' Harland whispered. 'Evidently not just an outpost affair as I thought at first.'

'Are those the soldiers of the other Sultan, then?' Dick asked.

'Yes; that's it.'

'They're your friends, then?'

'I'm not so sure of that. The fact is, both parties have discovered that I'm not a Moor, and in consequence, both are more or less convinced that I am a spy... No, we'll keep clear of the lot of them, if we can.'

Even as he spoke a tremendous shouting and crackling of musketry came from the main buildings. By the light of the flaming outhouses, horses could be seen rearing above the heads of a confused crowd of fighting men, who were surging backwards towards the gate. Pursuers and pursued were so mingled together that it was impossible to distinguish them apart; but Captain Harland, peering through the acrid clouds of smoke, came to a rapid conclusion.

'Abdul's men have been driven back, I believe—some of Mulai's cavalry charged them. They're retreating towards the gate'; he seized Sandy by the wrist, and motioned Dick to follow closely. 'We must mix with the crowd and go out with them,' he said, speaking with sudden resolution. 'It's the only thing to be done, risky as it is. If we're left behind, we shall be shot at sight—that's very certain.'

As he spoke, he left the shadow of the wall and slipped in amongst the outskirts of the struggling mass of men which swayed to and fro, now gaining, now losing ground, yet always moving by slow degrees backwards towards the great gate. It was a very perilous adventure, for the Moors were striking and shooting wildly, and bullets whizzed incessantly overhead.

But Harland kept on the fringe of the melée, joining in the shouts and frantic gestures with apparent ferocity. The shooting, moreover, was wild and very high, as is generally the case with Moorish marksmanship.

Backwards, and still backwards, the soldiers of Abdul Aziz were pressed, ridden down by Mulai's cavalry whenever they tried to make a momentary stand. Backwards, until the rearmost reached the gateway—backwards, until all were through, and scattering formlessly over the sandy level outside, or forming into little knots to withstand their pursuers.

Once clear of the buildings, Harland extricated himself and the boys from the crowd, and set off at full speed for the open ground beyond the cup-shaped hollow where the great camp had been pitched.

The sand made very heavy going, and the boys were almost exhausted when at last their father came to a standstill and flung himself in the shelter of a clump of shady bushes.

Dick and Sandy followed his example with huge relief, and the three lay face downward in the sand, panting and breathless.

'We must have come three miles or more,' Captain Harland said. 'We ought to be safe enough, for I think we're out of the track of the fugitives, and I don't suppose that Mulai's men will follow them far.'

'What are we going to do next?' Sandy inquired, struggling into a sitting position.

'Oh—next! Wait here until morning—and that's not far off now. I hear the cocks beginning to crow in the hill villages. As soon as it is light, the quicker we get away from here the better, I fancy.'

'We'll go straight and get the treasure then, won't we?' Dick ventured.

'That's easier to say than to do, boy. There's the question of food; we can't strike off into the desert without anything to eat or drink, and there's nothing to be got except what you carry with you.'

Captain Harland lay back with his hands locked behind his head, frowning with intent thought. Dawn was breaking in grey streaks over the hills behind Mulai Hafid's camp, and a little cold, whimpering wind seemed to bring a message from the approaching day.

It was Sandy, after all, who brought forward a plan of campaign. 'I know!' he said eagerly. 'Let me and Dick go to one of those places—farms, or whatever they are—where the fowls are crowing. We could buy food, then, couldn't we, and something to carry water in, too, if you've any money, Father?'

'Oh, yes, I've a little money.' Captain Harland also sat up, leaning on his elbow. 'Upon my word, my lad, that's not a bad idea at all. Fortunately, you kids can pass as natives anywhere, and I've no doubt the people will be ready enough to sell you what we want. Your Arabic's all right, too.'

'We ought to be jolly thankful to that old beast of a Levi for that,' chuckled Sandy.

'It ought to be easy enough,' Dick remarked, reflectively.

'Yes, and safe enough, too, or you may be sure I wouldn't let you go. It would be quite a different matter if I went. Keep clear of the camp and you'll be all right. Wait a bit, though, it's too early yet for even natives to be stirring.'

They waited until the dawn had strengthened into daylight. Then the boys departed, delighted at the prospect of action, with a few small coins tied into the end of Dick's waistbelt.

It is not necessary to describe the morning adventures of Dick and Sandy minutely. At the first farm they visited they were driven away with insults and the unpleasant proximity of a remarkably fierce dog. Their next attempt fared no better, and they were footsore and weary with tramping before they finally reached the abode of a benevolent-looking old Moor, who kindly received them and listened to their timid request.

In the end, he sent them off rejoicing with a sheepskin bottle of water and sundry loaves of native bread, together with cakes of dates and raisins and some slabs of native sweetmeats for the special delectation of the boys. Withal, he absolutely refused to accept any payment, and as the boys departed, laden with their spoils, they felt that they should not easily forget their ten-minutes' friendship with the stately old man.

But it was on the way back to the place where they had left their father that a real and most unexpected adventure befell the boys—an adventure which was to change all the rest of their story.

(*Continued on page* 306.)

"A group of men rushed past them, brandishing torches and weapons and shouting fiercely."

"'Dick, Dick, don't you see who it is?—It's Achmet!'"

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 303.)

CHAPTER XV.

THEY had encountered very few travellers hitherto, and those few had paid little heed to the insignificant pair of Jewish ragamuffins carrying their provisions wrapped in pieces of coarse native cotton.

But suddenly along the bridle-path which led from Mulai Hafid's camp in the hollow of the mountains came a little cavalcade of horsemen.

They were well mounted and wore flowing snow-white robes. The uniform scarlet saddle-cloths of the horses and the long, silver-inlaid muskets which each rider carried slung over his shoulder, as well as their general bearing, proclaimed them to be soldiers. They were riding straight towards the boys, and Dick came to a standstill. 'I say, we don't particularly want those fellows to see us,' he said. 'I don't think they have yet. They may be friends or they may be enemies—and really, if you come to think of it, we don't know which is which, any more than they do.'

Sandy nodded his agreement with this rather involved statement. 'Hadn't we better hide somewhere or other until they've gone past?' he suggested.

It was easier to propose this than to carry it out, since a few thin and straggling bushes made the only hiding-place in sight. But suddenly the remembrance of old games at the seaside came to Dick. 'I know!' he cried. 'We'll bury ourselves in the sand. Here, lie down in this hollow, and I'll cover you up.'

In a few moments Sandy and the bundles of provisions were almost entirely hidden, and Dick, as he dug himself in, trusted that the Moors would pass without noticing those trifling portions of his person which he found it impossible to cover unassisted.

And then, after all, these pains and labours were entirely wasted.

The soft, deadened thudding of hoofs drew nearer and nearer, until the little band of soldiers were almost abreast of the boys' hiding-place.

Then of a sudden Dick was startled by a wild shout from Sandy, and, to his horrified amazement, beheld his brother scrambling to his feet, flinging showers of sand in all directions.

'Dick, Dick—don't you see who it is?" the younger boy cried, excitedly. 'Come along! Just look—it's Achmet!'

At the sound of Sandy's voice, the leader of the Moors had pulled round his horse, and brought it to a standstill. He now sat leaning forward in the saddle, and peering down at the two boys, with a very perplexed expression on his handsome dark face, Dick saw at once that he was one-armed, guiding his horse with his left hand alone. Yet even without that proof, and without Sandy's words, he would have recognised the Moor in an instant as the very same man who had been their father's guide, and who had brought them Captain Harland's message.

For Achmet himself, recognition was not nearly so easy. There was a wide difference between these two grimy little native lads and the trim Eton-suited schoolboys whom he had seen before in Mr. Wilcox's stuffy study.

Yet, even so, Sandy's use of English had evidently made an impression, for he demanded in the same language: 'Who are you?'

'We are Dick and Sandy Harland—Captain Harland's sons. Oh, don't you remember us, Achmet?' Dick cried piteously. 'Do try to remember us . . . please! We were with Mr. Wilcox, our uncle; he fetched us from school to see you. You brought us a message from Father . . . and the little brown book. You told us how he had been captured—how he saved your life . . . and then you were to wait for the money for his ransom . . . Oh, it really is us, Achmet—do believe it!'

Slowly the Moor's expression changed from blank incredulity to perplexed doubt. He dismounted, throwing the reins of his horse to one of his companions, and came close up to the boys, staring down into their faces. Then a look of recognition gleamed in his grave dark eyes, and he said quietly, using the perfect English which the boys remembered: 'Yes. I see now that you are indeed the sons of Sidi Harland, to whom I carried his message in the City of London. But, in the name of Allah the Most High, how came you here—and in this strange manner?'

'It would take an awfully long time to tell you all about it,' Dick said. 'We came to find the treasure that our father was looking for, so that we might be able to pay his ransom quickly . . . but don't mind about all that now. Besides, it really doesn't matter—because we've found something much better than the treasure, Achmet—and that's our father himself!'

'Thy father!—the Captain Harland?' There was amazed and delighted incredulity in the Moor's voice and look.

'Yes, it's quite true. He escaped from the tribesmen—but he'll tell you all about that himself. Oh, come along to him at once, Achmet; he'll be so tremendously pleased to see you! He's quite near here—at least, I suppose it's about a mile or so—behind that clump of bushes over there.'

(*Continued on page* 315.)

DOING HIS BIT.

I AM the most unlucky dog in all the country round;
I wish I were a spaniel, a retriever, or a hound.
But I'm only just a common little terrier, you see—
The sporting dogs have all the fun, but there is none for me.

I often see the hounds go by, and long to join the fun;
They all look so excited when they're going for a run.
The huntsman always takes them out, and they are free to roam
For miles across the countryside, while I'm penned up at home.

They're trained to hunt the foxes, and they love it, you can see—
They all go off together just as happy as can be;
They follow them o'er hill and dale, no matter where they race,
While if I hunt a rabbit I am beaten in disgrace.

There's Joey, the retriever, who lives across the way,
And Bob and Bill, the spaniels, whom I saw the other day;
Their masters all go shooting, and of course they take them too,
While a little trot with Charlie is the only thing I do.

I'm very fond of Charlie, but he doesn't understand
How dull it is for me to sit and listen to the band,
To stroll along the esplanade, or sit beside the sea.
It may be very nice for him, but, oh, it's dull for me!

He cannot join the others when they all go off to play,
And if it weren't for me he'd have a very lonely day;
For he's a feeble little boy who's always left behind,
But he says that if I'm left with him he really doesn't mind.

Perhaps it's just as bad for him—of that I never thought;
He misses all the boyish games, and I miss all the sport.
And if he never grumbles then, but bears it like a man,
I'll bear it like a doggie, too, and cheer him all I can.

E. M. Haines.

FREDDY'S CARELESSNESS.

BREAKFAST was over, and Mr. Mowbray sat at his desk, writing letters. Out on the lawn, Jack, Edith, and Dolly were having a last romp before the morning lessons began. They were happy children, and more than usually happy to-day because it was Freddy's birthday, and they were to have a number of their little friends to tea. Mr. Mowbray smiled as he watched their merry frolics. There was nothing he loved better than to see those around him, especially the children, happy.

But where was Freddy? As Mr. Mowbray asked himself this question, he heard the door of his room open, and, looking round, he saw Freddy himself.

'If you please, may I have some note-paper and an envelope?' he asked, rather timidly.

Mr. Mowbray saw that there was something amiss. He knew that there was always writing-paper in the little schoolroom upstairs, and he guessed that there was some special reason for Freddy's coming to him with such a request.

'What do you want them for?' he asked.

'I wish to write a letter,' Freddy answered.

'To whom do you wish to write?' Mr. Mowbray asked.

'To Cousin Norna,' Freddy replied, hesitatingly. 'I ought to have written yesterday to invite her to the party, but I forgot,' he blurted out, determined to make a clean breast of things. 'All the others have been already asked.'

'Freddy,' his father said, rather seriously, 'you are very careless. This bad habit is growing upon you, and will be the cause of much trouble to you if you do not master it. I have told you about it several times.' He looked at his watch. 'It is nearly post-time,' he continued, 'and if you do not catch this post Norna Ryan will not get her invitation in time. Come to the desk and write your note as quickly as you can, but do it properly.'

Freddy took his seat at the desk, and wrote an invitation in a large round-hand. In spite of his wish to be quick, it seemed to take a long time. When he had finished it his father read it over, while Freddy addressed an envelope.

'Yes, that will do very nicely,' his father said. 'Now seal it up. Here is a stamp. You have just five minutes in which to reach the pillar-box—plenty of time, if you are quick.'

Freddy saw that his father had already finished one or two letters, which lay sealed and stamped upon the desk. 'Shall I post these for you, Father?' he said.

Mr. Mowbray hesitated for a moment. 'No, I think not, thank you,' he replied. 'I will post them myself later. They are very important, but not urgent like yours.'

Freddy hurried out of the room, and a minute later he was running along the garden-path. The pillar-box was only a hundred yards down the street, and Freddy was back again before the time was up. Mr. Mowbray heard him run up the stairs to join his brother and sisters in the schoolroom, where Miss Bowling, the governess, had already begun the lessons.

Mr. Mowbray wrote a few more letters, and then went out to the pillar-box himself. When he returned he called upstairs for Freddy, and took him into his room. He had a letter in his hand. 'What is this?' he said, as he handed the letter to Freddy.

Freddy was quite taken by surprise. The letter was the one which he had written and posted only a little while before. Completely puzzled, he looked to his father for an explanation.

'I found it stuck in the opening of the pillar-box,' Mr. Mowbray said. 'I suppose that with your usual carelessness you did not take the trouble to see the letter go through. The postman has also overlooked it, and so the letter has missed the post. I found it when I went to post my own letters, and I brought it back with me to show you how careless you had been, and because it is no use sending it now—it cannot reach Norna Ryan in time.'

Freddy was crestfallen; his eyes began to fill with tears. He loved Norna better than any other of his friends. 'Oh, how silly I have been!' he said, half angrily.

'Not silly, Freddy, but careless,' his father said, gravely. 'This has not happened because you did not understand what you were doing, but because you did not trouble to do it properly. You did not watch and think.'

'I was thinking of the party—of Connie, and Cyril, and Joan, and all of them—and how happy we should all be,' said Freddy, disconsolately. 'And now, Norna cannot come. Oh, how tiresome!'

'I am afraid you will never be cured of your carelessness until a number of disappointments like this teach you to fix your thoughts upon what you are doing,' his father said.

'I don't mind for myself,' said Freddy, who was really generous at heart; 'but what will Norna think when she hears all about it, and finds she has been left out?'

'It is one of the common results of carelessness that others must suffer as well as the one who is careless,' his father said. 'That ought to help you to get the better of the bad habit. You will have to explain things to Norna when you see her. I am sorry for you, but you forgot to write to her yesterday, and you missed the post this morning. Now go back to your lessons, and try to do better in future.'

Freddy did as he was bidden. The mistake which he had made caused him much unhappiness through the day, and Jack, Edith, and Dolly were nearly as grieved as he was when they learned that Norna was left out. But they had not very much time to worry about it, because they had to prepare for their other guests.

"Freddy took his seat at the desk, and wrote an invitation."

At four o'clock their cousins and friends began to arrive, and who should be among the first but Norna!

Freddy ran with joy to greet her. 'How did you get to know about it?' he asked.

'I got a telegram,' she replied, with an air of importance.

'A telegram! Who sent it?'

'Who sent it?' Norna repeated. 'Why, Uncle James, of course.'

'Oh, I see,' said Freddy. 'I will go and thank him, and then I will tell you all about it.'

W. A. Atkinson.

"He dealt a violent blow at Jimmy's head, which Jimmy had no difficulty in avoiding."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

(Continued from page 298.)

CHAPTER XVII.

THE boys assembled in the hall at Stanhope's for Call-over, which was taken by Manning. Jimmy was there amongst the first, in a little group with Henderson, Scott, and Pilling, near the door. Norman came in amongst the last. There was a bruise on his cheek, and a cut over his eye, where his spectacles had hurt him as he fell. He had come a tremendous cropper on to the pavement, straight on to his face. His spectacles

had been broken, but he now had on another pair. He still looked furiously angry, and cast about for Jimmy the moment he came into the hall.

Jimmy was ready for him, and so were the other three. He had determined that he would bring on a regular fight with Norman now, if he could get him to accept it; and the other three were ready to back him up.

The moment Norman appeared Pilling said: 'Hullo, Conqueror! You've taken a licking from Henshaw, haven't you? My goodness! He's marked you!'

Henderson and Scott laughed freely, and Jimmy said: 'Do you want any more, Conqueror? I'm quite ready for you, if you do.'

Norman's rage flowed over. He dealt a violent blow at Jimmy's head, which Jimmy had no difficulty in avoiding. Before he could get at him again, Henderson and Scott had hustled in between them. 'Fight it out in the proper place, if you want to fight,' said Henderson. 'There's no time now.'

'Fight! I'm not going to fight the cocky little brute,' shouted Norman. 'I'm going to give him a jolly good licking.'

'Well, he isn't going to take it,' said Henderson, and would have said more, but at the moment Manning came in, and Manning expected more or less of silence when he took Call, so as to get it over as quickly as possible.

The dispute, however, went on in low tones all the time that names were being called. Henderson and Scott and Pilling kept resolutely between Norman and Jimmy, so that Norman could not get at him, but Jimmy was allowed to have his say. 'I'm not going to take a licking from you,' he said. 'I'm going to fight you. I've had enough of your beastly cheek.'

Pilling laughed. He was enjoying himself. 'That's the way to tackle him,' he said. 'Going to fight, Conqueror, or going to funk it?'

Norman looked about him. Everybody was interested, and watching him to see what he would do. Nobody was very sympathetic with him, either. He had few friends amongst boys of his own standing. He 'sucked up,' as the phrase goes, to boys at the top of the school, some of whom found him amusing, and he liked to be considered an important personage amongst the lower boys. But the best among them didn't like him, and his influence among the rest didn't amount to much. For he was only an imitation 'swell,' and not a real one.

He saw now that he had got himself into a difficulty. He was so much bigger than Jimmy that he had little doubt about being able to beat him if he did fight him. But it would be a very undignified position for him to accept a regular fight with a lower boy. All the sympathy would be on one side, and however quickly he might bring the fight to an end, he would get no glory from it.

He was obliged to pocket his pride. 'Of course, I'm not going to fight a lower boy,' he said, shrugging his shoulders and turning away.

'No, I thought you wouldn't. Funk stick!' said Pilling.

'Don't make such a row down in that corner,' said Manning from the end of the room, and recriminations renewed themselves in a lower tone.

'I can't tackle the whole lot of you together,' said Norman, regaining some of the *sang froid* on which he prided himself. 'But I'll give Henshaw the biggest licking he ever had in his life when I catch him alone, and I'll give you one to match it, little liver Pills."

'Somehow I quite like the name, from you,' said Pilling, affably; but now call was over, and Manning came down the room on his way out.

'What's all this row about?' he asked, as he came to the group by the door. 'Hullo, Conqueror! Somebody seems to have marked you. Been having a scrap?'

'No, we're trying to arrange one for him,' said the ever-ready Pilling. 'And he says he won't take it on.'

'It has been suggested that I shall fight Master Henshaw,' said Norman in his loftiest tones. Manning was easy in his friendships and found Norman an amusing companion. It gave Norman a good conceit with himself to be seen frequently in company with one of the greatest 'swells' in the school, and he thought Manning would be quite on his side over refusing to take the cheek of a lower boy in offering to fight him.

But Manning said, after a quick look round: 'Well, why don't you? I should think you'd stand a very good chance with him.'

Norman flushed. 'I'll keep the ring,' Manning went on. 'It's a long time since we had a regular scrap. Let's fix it for after tea. Neither of you need eat anything unless you like.'

It was a half-holiday, and there was over half an hour's leisure between tea and the time fixed for prep.

The younger boys standing round showed pleased excitement at the prospect opened out to them.

Norman made one more effort. 'I don't see how you can expect me to fight a lower boy,' he said in a dignified way. 'Anyhow, I should like a word with you about it upstairs first.'

'Oh, I don't see why you shouldn't fight him,' said Manning, moving away. 'I fought a fellow as big as you in my second term and he gave me a jolly good hiding. It did both of us a lot of good.'

He went out, leaving Norman behind. The fact was that he saw pretty plainly what Pilling had also seen and mentioned to Jimmy, that Norman was training himself on the same lines as had made Williams such an unsatisfactory influence on the school, and especially on the house, life. Williams had been brought to his senses, and it seemed to Manning that it would do Norman no harm if he should be brought to his. And Manning was not quite sure either that Williams was not still working, through Norman. Williams was a puzzle at present. He kept very quiet, imposed his society on nobody, and gave no indication as to how he felt about his late disgrace, or whether he was really ashamed of himself or not. But he did make a constant companion of Norman, and here was Norman bullying lower boys in the same disagreeable, unboylike way that Williams had done, though not, of course, with such effect. If he wanted to bully, let him do it with his hands and take the consequences, and not be always wagging a nasty tongue like a spiteful old woman. Manning had heard him do this to Jimmy himself, and had thought of mentioning it to him, but had forgotten. But it would put a stop to it in a better way if the boy who had received the annoyance met it by a plucky fight.

And Manning had happened by chance to see Jimmy stand up against his friend Buttons with the gloves on. He thought that a fight between him and Norman might give some amusing results.

(*Continued on page* 318.)

A STRANGE MALADY.

PERHAPS you did not know that metals suffer from diseases. But this is so, for some of them change very much if they be kept too hot or too cold for any length of time, just as a man would. And, moreover, good sound metal can catch the disease if it be left in the presence of the diseased body.

A very good example of this is afforded by tin. This metal is generally known to us in the form of bright and white sheets. About thirty years ago, a heap of such sheets of tin was stored in a hut in the North of Siberia throughout the winter, which happened to be a very long and severe one; the thermometer going to many degrees below freezing point. With the approach of the warmer summer weather, the owners of the tin came to cart it away. To their great astonishment, all that they could find in the hut was a heap of grey powder.

Men of science were asked to account for this strange happening. They tried experiments with ordinary tin, putting it in various cold places; and found out that whenever tin is so kept it decays, forming the grey powder which the Russian merchants had first discovered. Then they placed a little of the powder on an ordinary tin vessel. The good tin caught the disease, and although the temperature was just the ordinary temperature of the air, it was slowly changed, became powdery and greyish, and, after a while, the tin article fell to pieces.

For the disease, however, there is a cure, and it is the cure that would naturally be expected. The trouble is caused by great cold, and the remedy, therefore, is likely to be found in applying heat. And this is found to be so. If some of the grey powder be heated, it is converted back into the ordinary shining metal we know so well.

WILLIAM H. PICK.

A NIGHT IN THE TRENCHES.

PART I.

GUY and Joe had only just arrived to spend a week of the holidays with Aunt Gladys, when she received a telegram from her son to say that he had just got five days' leave from the Front, and would arrive in London that night.

So of course Aunt Gladys went off immediately to meet him, and Guy and Joe found themselves left to their own resources on the very first day of their visit.

For a while they wandered round the house exploring, and at a loss to know what to do with themselves. At last they opened the kitchen door, and found a comfortable-looking, middle-aged woman washing up the dinner things, while a dog lay on the rug before the fire.

'Hullo!' said Joe, 'are you the cook?'

'Yes, sir,' answered the woman; 'and I'm sure I hope as you two young gentlemen will have a very pleasant holiday down here.'

'Well, you see, we don't quite know what to do with ourselves to-day while Aunt is out. Is there anything interesting anywhere about to go and see?'

'Well, sir, I don't know what you calls interesting. There's a lot of trenches dug over towards Fosham. But that's a good way off.'

'How far?'

'I should think 'tis three miles quite across the heath. 'Tis four if you go round by the road.'

'Look here, Guy,' said Joe; 'how'll that be? Suppose we walk over the heath and look at the trenches?'

'All right. Are they good ones, Cookie?'

'Oh, yes, sir. I hears they've done a lot with them over there—dug 'em all out in the same patterns like what they has at the Front.'

'Come on then, Guy. Let's take the dog and get off. I haven't seen any decent trenches yet, being in town always.'

It was a long three miles, but the two boys tramped on in a business-like way across the heath, while the dog tore about in pursuit of rabbits. In less than an hour they came in sight of long lines of white sand stretching across the heath in both directions, and eagerly set to work to explore them and study the plans.

'This must be the front line,' said Guy. 'What they call the firing trench, and these running back here and here would be the communication trenches.'

'What are these funny little T-shaped arrangements in the front here for?' asked Joe.

'Those must be the trenches for machine guns,' answered Guy. 'I know they put them here and there along the front line; then these, you see, are the "dug-outs," where they write their letters home, and eat bully beef. Oh, I wish I were older, and could go out to the Front. I'm going to camp, though, with the O.T.C. this summer."

'A lot of good you'd be if you got to the Front,' sneered Joe. 'You'd stick in your "dug-out," reading, till the sergeant had to stick his bayonet into you to rouse you up. Look here, you hold the dog here in this trench, and I'll go off down the communication trench and get into another line altogether, and hide up, and we'll see if he can find me.'

'All right,' said Guy, seizing the dog, and Joe went off down the narrow, muddy trench.

Guy and the dog waited for some time, but no cooey or signal of any sort coming, Guy let the dog go. 'Find him!' he cried; and the animal darted off full speed. Up and down, and in and out, they scurried together; Guy and the dog both thoroughly enjoying this original game of hide-and-seek. But no Joe was to be found anywhere.

'He must have got out of the trenches altogether, old man,' said Guy to the dog at last. 'Suppose we climb out and have a look.'

Up they climbed on to the heath, where the dog, after running about in all directions for a bit, suddenly found the scent he wanted, and tore off towards a further line of trenches more than a hundred yards away.

'Well, he has led us a chase,' exclaimed Guy. 'Who would have thought of his cutting off here?'

At this moment the dog stopped short, barking excitedly, and Guy, catching up, looked down into the trench beside which he stood. It was a deep one, and at the bottom lay Joe in a funny position, looking ghastly white.

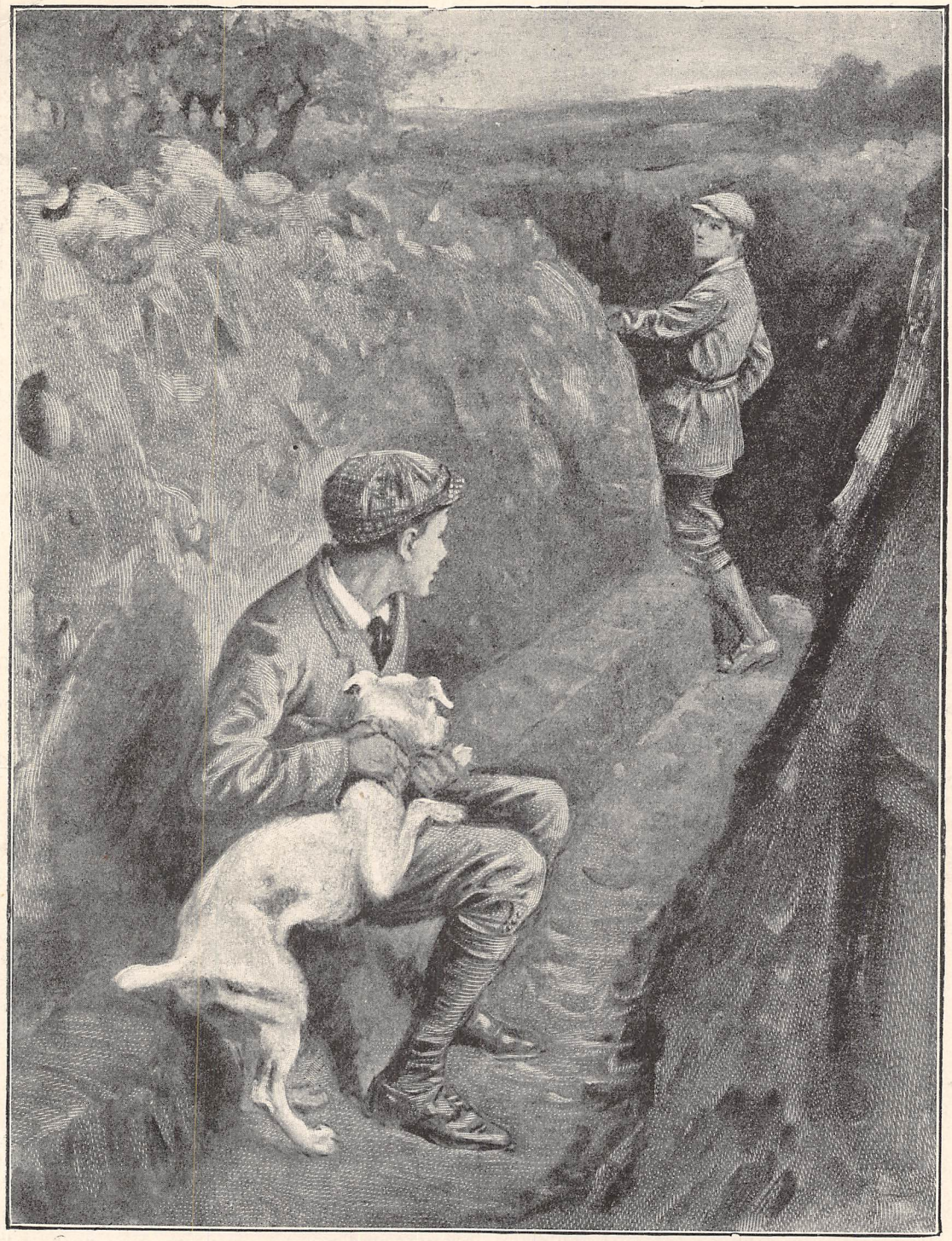
'What's up?' exclaimed Guy. 'What are you doing?'

'Hurt my leg,' was the short answer.

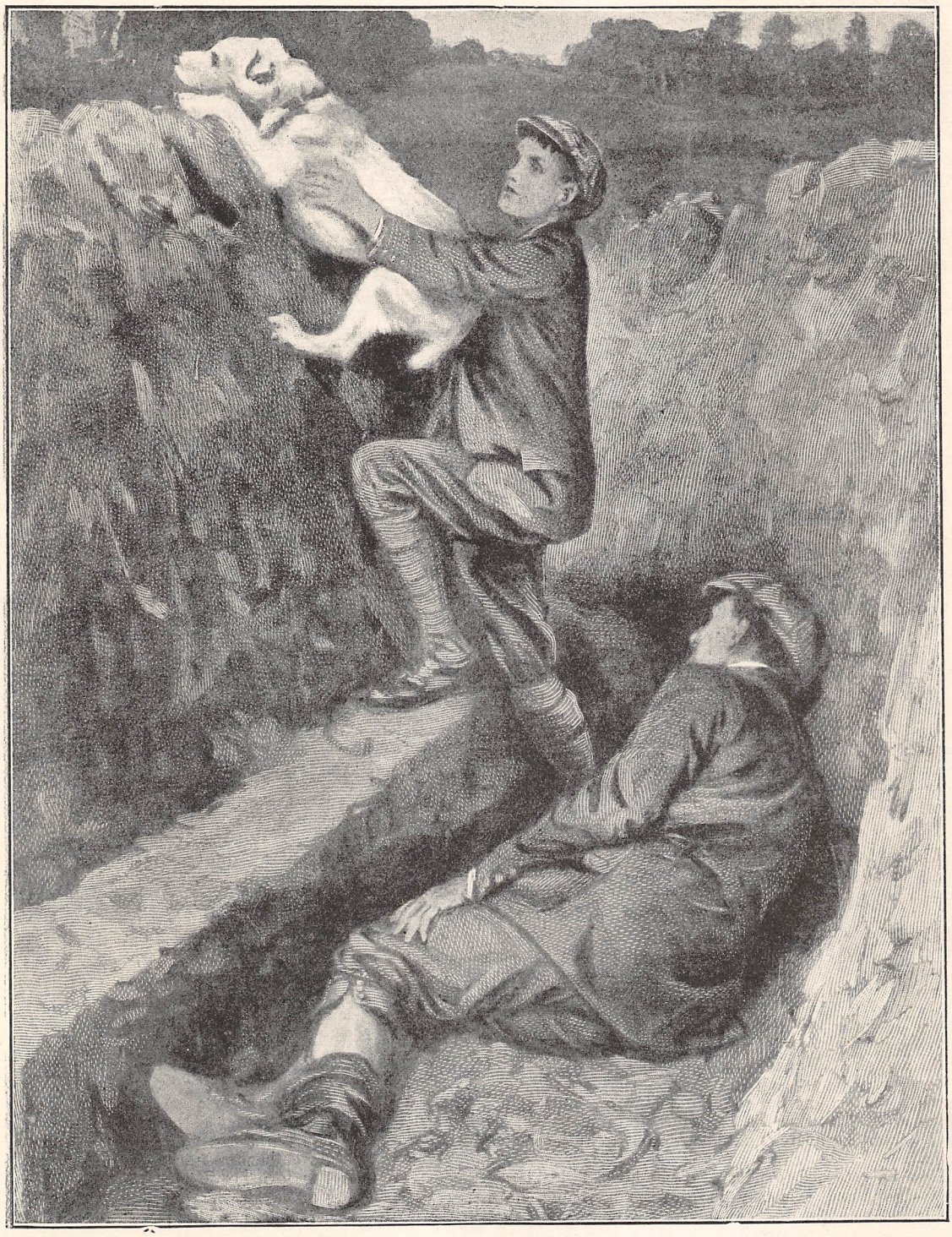
Guy jumped down beside him, and to his dismay found that the leg was evidently very badly hurt. It could not be moved without excruciating pain, and Joe himself was quite sure it was broken.

'How on earth did you manage to do it?' asked Guy, looking down at his brother. 'A pretty fix we're in now.'

(*Concluded on page* 314.)



"Joe went off down the narrow, muddy trench."



"He put one foot on the ledge which ran along the back wall of the trench, and lifted the dog out."

A NIGHT IN THE TRENCHES.

(*Concluded from page* 311.)

PART II.

POOR Joe, who was suffering agonies, lay still, unable to speak for a few minutes. Presently he managed to explain what he had done. 'I thought I'd give old Peter here a good puzzle,' he said; 'so I went some way down that front line, and then along the communication trench to the support line. Then I got out, you see, and made for this as fast as I could go. I was just up to the edge, when my foot caught in a stump or a root, or something—goodness knows what it was.'

'And you fell in,' said Guy.

Joe gave something between a grunt and a groan, which meant 'yes.' Then he clenched his teeth, and lay still.

'Look here,' said Guy, 'what are we going to do? You can't stop here all night, and you can't get up. I must go and get help.'

'You mustn't go. I'm not going to be left here alone,' said Joe.

'But I must,' said Guy. 'We can't get you home without help, and there's no one else to go.'

'Can't help it. I'm not going to be left alone in this plight.'

'Well, what are we to do? We can't stop here and do nothing.'

'What about the dog? Don't people always send a message by the dog when this sort of thing happens?'

'Of course!' exclaimed Guy. 'That's the ticket. Here, Peter, old man, let's see what mettle you're made of. You've got to go home and take a message for us. Wait a mo', I've got some paper in my pocket. Now, then, what shall I say?'

'Anything,' groaned Joe; 'only get it done.'

Guy scribbled two or three lines on the envelope he had taken from his pocket. 'There, that'll do,' he said. 'Joe's leg broken. In the trenches at Fosham. Send a trap to fetch us.—Guy.' 'Now for a bit of string,' and he pulled a length from his pocket, and tied the note on to Peter's collar. Then he put one foot on the ledge which ran along the back wall of the trench about a foot and a half from the ground, lifted the dog out, and scrambled out after him. 'Off you go, home!' he shouted, and Peter trotted off a little way, and then turned and waited.

'Go on, good dog, go home,' called Guy, and the animal trotted off again and disappeared behind some rising ground. Guy sprang into the trench again. 'He's off,' he said. 'Cheer up, old man, he'll be home in no time, and they'll send something to fetch us directly.'

Guy spoke as cheerfully as he could, but his heart sank when, a few minutes later, the dog came racing up to them in great delight at having found them again.

Once more Guy took him up and started him off for home, speaking angrily to him, and even throwing stones after him when he had started, to make sure there should be no temptation to him to turn back again.

Then he returned to poor Joe, who lay still, looking very white, and evidently in great pain, though he hardly spoke at all.

For a long time they waited, Joe vigorously objecting to any suggestions Guy made of going for help himself. A look at the road now and then was all he would agree to, and the only thing that passed was a motor-car which was gone in a moment before Guy had time to hail it.

Hour after hour went by, till at last the sound of a motor-horn in the distance made Guy scramble out of the trench and hurry off in the direction of the road, where his frantic waving and shouts as the car approached had the result of bringing it to a standstill.

'What's the matter?' asked a man's voice, and Guy found, to his intense relief, that he had waylaid the village doctor, who lived close to Aunt Gladys, and who was returning from a midnight call to Fosham. With great difficulty he and Guy managed to get poor Joe out of the trench, and carried him to the car, when a very few minutes brought them home.

When they reached the house, they found the servants in a great state of alarm. They had been making inquiries all over the village, and were sitting up all night in the hope that the boys might arrive before morning.

'What about Peter?' asked Guy. 'We sent him home with a message.'

'Peter came in late in the evening,' answered Cook; 'and went straight off to his rug, and went to sleep.'

Sure enough there lay Peter fast asleep with his head on the note, which was still fast to his collar. No one had noticed it!

Later in the day Aunt Gladys and Cousin Cecil reached home, and after all explanations had been made, Cousin Cecil sat by Joe's bedside, and entertained both boys with tales of his experiences in what they called 'the real trenches.'

'Never mind your broken leg, old fellow,' he said. 'I've got a whole fortnight's leave, after all, and we'll have a jolly good time together at home. You and I have had enough of trenches to last us for the present, haven't we?'

E. M. HAINES.

MOTHERLAND OF ENGLAND.

MOTHERLAND of England,
Land of old renown,
Land of castle, cottage,
Village, city, town:
Land whose bosom bore us
When we saw the light,
Life outstretched before us
Like a vision bright.
Earth hath other countries,
Fields in beauty drest,
Mot erland of England,
Dearest thou and best.

Motherland of England,
Land of hearth and home,
Hither in the evening
All the children come;
Round the fireside gather,
While the games go round,
Mother, child, and father,
All in love fast bound.
Other climes are lovely,
Other lands are blest;
Motherland of England,
Thou art still the best.

Motherland of England,
Land of Sport and Game,
Down through all the ages
Thou art still the same.
Drake in days far vanished
Played on Plymouth Green,
Robin Hood, the banished,
Graced the woodland scene.
In the playfields yesterday
Boys the ball fast drove;
Motherland of England,
Take our homage, love.

Motherland of England,
Land of sire and son,
Thousand years stretch backward,
Years still beckon on.
Still outshines thy glory,
Like the sunset gold;
Like unfinished story,
Only yet half told.
Other lands are famous,
Strong and great and free,
Motherland of England,
Our hearts beat for thee.

FRANK ELLIS.

HELD TO RANSOM.

BY V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 306.)

EVEN the grave and sedate Moor caught the infection of the boys' excitement; moreover, it was very plain that he was himself delighted at the prospect of seeing Captain Harland again. He listened eagerly to the disconnected explanations and information which Dick and Sandy gave him as they hurried along, Achmet walking between them, and leading his horse by its scarlet leather bridle.

As for the boys, they could not contain their delight.

'Isn't it splendid?' Sandy cried, exultantly. 'Everything's coming right in such a happy-ever-after kind of way—just like the last chapter of a book called *With the Murdering Moor*, or something. It just makes it perfect, finding Achmet like this. And now we shall finish up by getting the treasure, and all go home tremendously rich, and—isn't it splendid?'

Dick agreed more quietly, but with scarcely less excitement; it did really seem as though they had come within sight of the end of all their troubles and anxieties.

The way back to the place where Captain Harland was waiting seemed to stretch itself out like a piece of elastic. But at last they came within earshot of the hillocks and clumps of scrubby bushes. The boys forgot their weariness as they raced across the last space of sand, with Sandy ahead and shouting at the top of his voice, 'Father! Father! Guess who we've brought! It's Ach——'

The shout was broken off short on his lips as he reached the top of the hillock and stared down into the hollow beyond. Then he wheeled round towards his companions, with a look of blank and startled amazement upon his face. 'Why . . . why! . . .' he stammered in bewilderment. 'Dick! . . . Achmet! . . . he's gone! . . .'

Dick reached the younger boy's side in an instant, only to find the words unmistakably true.

There was no sign of Captain Harland. Only the trampled sand and a discarded scrap of rag from Sandy's clothing showed that it was the very same spot where the boys had left him.

What could have happened? Dick and Sandy looked into each other's eyes and saw reflected there the same belief and the same dread.

'He must have been . . . taken prisoner again . . .' Dick said, with dry lips.

'Yes . . . that must be it . . .' Sandy acquiesced; and then his self-control gave way suddenly, and he burst out with a little choking sob: 'Oh, Dick . . . and when we . . . we'd only just found him . . .!'

Dick slipped one arm round the younger boy's shoulder with a protecting gesture. 'I know, old chap . . . I know!' he said, huskily. 'But . . . but it mayn't be so bad as we think. Very likely he's quite all right—just walked away for a bit into the desert or something, you know.'

'Yes, of course, that's very likely,' Sandy agreed, hastily rubbing his eyes with the back of his hand.

But at the back of both boys' minds a dread and terrible thought lurked, a thought which they resolutely refused to put into words.

They knew well how Captain Harland had feared the possibility of falling into the hands of either party—and they knew, too, that he must have had good reason for those fears.

'He hasn't even got the directions to find the treasure,' Dick said, self-reproachfully; 'so he can't use that to ransom himself. 'Oh, Sandy, I wish we hadn't taken the paper, or that we'd given it back to him!'

'Perhaps it's Achmet's lot who've taken him prisoner,' Sandy suggested, hopefully. 'If so, I should think we'd easily get them to release him.'

The Moor meanwhile had been searching the ground in all directions, but he shook his head when the boys questioned him. 'There is no trampling of horses—no sign of a struggle,' he said. 'It seems likely that the Sidi Harland wandered forth into the desert, and was taken prisoner—or perhaps he has but lost his path; in any case, we will first find whether he has been captured by our own outposts; afterwards we will search further.'

The Moor's calm confidence was cheering, and their hopefulness revived as they watched his methodical preparations for a thorough search.

He dispatched one of his men to Mulai Hafid's headquarters at full speed, and in an extraordinarily short time the messenger returned to say that Harland had certainly not been recaptured. Accordingly, Achmet proceeded to divide his little band of a dozen men into four or five detachments, who were to search the desert in different directions.

The leader kept Dick and Sandy with himself, together with one of his troopers, and they rode on slowly, each horseman carrying one of the boys behind him on his saddle. The keen dark eyes of the Moors were constantly on the alert, roving over the countryside, and they rode to the summit of every rise in order to obtain a view of the surrounding desert.

From time to time Achmet told the boys something of his own story in his calm, dignified way, and they gathered that he was in high favour with the Sultan Mulai Hafid, who had given him entire command of the cavalry of his army. It was the arrival of Achmet and his troopers, at the close of the fighting on the night

'"There is no trampling of horses—no sign of a struggle.'"

before, which had turned the tide against the soldiers of Abdul Aziz, and enabled Mulai's troops to hold the great camp.

'If only you'd been there before though, Achmet!' sighed Sandy. 'Then we shouldn't have been shut up, or had to escape, or anything; because you would have been able to tell Mulai Hafid who we were, and he'd have believed you.'

And Achmet acquiesced gravely and regretfully.

(*Continued on page* 322.)

HEAD OF A SYRIAN LADY.

(*Engraved on Wood.*)

SOME SECRETS OF SUCCESS.

A RICH American, whose successful enterprises in the iron trade are of world-wide renown, was once talking of some of the secrets of his success.

'I have been fortunate,' he said, 'in finding good men to carry out my schemes. I think, perhaps, experience and practice have made me more apt than some to detect the hidden worth of a man. I have picked my trusted helpers from all sources. It is not necessary a man should have a technical knowledge of the iron trade to be useful to me. Given a little time and training, if he has proved valuable in a dry goods store, he will prove valuable to me. It is grit and energy we want, and men who own these qualities are the backbone of an industry.

The millionaire paused, and gave a little smile, and a shake of the head, as he continued: 'I am not infallible though, and my judgment has on some occasions been at fault. There are men who have justified my opinion up to a certain point. They have worked well, and have been trustworthy in subordinate positions. That is their limit. Give them authority, and they lose their heads. Instead of making it the starting-point towards a successful career, it has been the first step in a downward course.'

The words with which he ended were significant: 'I have promoted men to their ruin.'

What a lesson is to be found here for boys who want to make a success of their life! First, to put heart and soul into their work, even if its sphere is not entirely their own choice. The grit and energy which are thereby developed will perhaps carry them on to their chosen career. And the second lesson is to cultivate trustworthiness and steadiness of purpose, in order that a level head may be kept when good fortune and promotion arrive, and the verdict may never have to be given, '*I have promoted him to his ruin.*' M. H.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 310.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

MANNING kept the ring. Henderson was Jimmy's second, with Pilling to act as bottle-holder. Williams was Norman's second. This was a surprise to everybody, for it meant his coming out of his shell to champion a big boy against a small one, and it had been hoped that he had given up that sort of thing. To Jimmy it was more of a surprise than to anybody else, because he had thought that Williams regretted having bullied him, and yet here he was backing up another would-be bully. But he had not much time to think over this, as he wanted all his attention for beating Norman. Norman was rather a weed of a boy, but he was a runner, and had lately been training for the Sports. Probably he knew nothing about fighting; for boys don't put on the gloves as much as they used to. But in any case, with Jimmy's great disadvantage in point of height and reach, it would not be easy to beat him.

The fight was held in the large lavatory and box-room in the basement of Stanhope's house. Nearly the whole house was there to look on. Bertram had desired that he should be told nothing about it, as it might be his duty to stop the fight; and a fag had been left upstairs to give warning in the unlikely event of Mr. Stanhope coming along. But there were nearly thirty boys standing round the ring or sitting on the slate washstand that ran along one side of the room, and there was perhaps none of them who did not hope that the smaller boy would beat the bigger. That was what Norman's efforts to create a position for himself by the use of his sharp tongue had earned him.

The two boys faced each other, stripped to the waist in proper fashion. Jimmy stood up squarely, in the position he had been taught, and looked a very proper little fighter. He had entirely got rid of the effects of his operation, and was at the top of his sturdy strength. A boy of fourteen who has not overgrown himself and has kept his muscles in practice strips well, and Jimmy was an admirable specimen of boyhood.

Norman was not nearly so good to look upon. Whatever muscular development he had was in his thighs and legs. Above his waist he was thin and not well-developed. There was even some laughter and comment as he peeled off his vest and stood up for all of them to see. This made him more furious than he had been before. He hated to be made a fool of, as most people who like making fools of others do, and he had felt that he was being made a great fool of in being forced to fight Jimmy according to all the rules of the ring, instead of giving him the licking he had promised him, as from a big boy to a small one who had cheeked him. His eyes, relieved of the spectacles he always wore, blinked angrily, and his anger took away from some of the shame he was feeling. He would rush in at the word and finish Jimmy off, and so end this ridiculous exhibition he was obliged to make of himself. But anger is not a good preparation for a fight against an opponent who knows something and keeps cool, as Norman was presently to find out.

Manning gave the word, and Norman made a dash at Jimmy, not striking out with his fists, but in the manner of a big boy who wants to collar a small one and punch his head. It had been obvious by the way he had stood up that he had never learnt to box, and it was made more obvious still by this foolish rush. Jimmy sprang away, and delivered two or three hard body punches, which surprised Norman considerably and incommoded him not a little. And he could not get hold of Jimmy, who danced round him and got in a blow here and a blow there, which incommoded him still further before he decided that the collaring game was not open to him, and decided to use his fists.

He had not wanted to use his fists: to that extent his unwillingness to fight Jimmy had been sound. A big boy, with his superior strength and reach, naturally hesitates, if he has anything of the sportsman in him, to hit out at the face, or even at the body, of a smaller one. But in his blind fury Norman forgot all that. If Jimmy had had more weight, he would have damaged him considerably by the sturdy direct punches he had delivered, especially by one that reached up towards the corner of his jaw, and had been warded off from the danger-spot more by chance than design. As it was, he had punished him. Norman felt only the desire to punish him in return, stopped his wild rushes and hit out furiously.

But he did not know how to hit. Jimmy kept his

arms close to his sides and shielded his body at the same time as he delivered his blows. He also used his spring to get out of reach of attack. Norman stood firmly on his feet and hit out with all his force, but in such a way that Jimmy could get under his guard every time. Three or four more stiff body punches, and Norman began to breathe hard and to strike more wildly still; also to lose some of his fury, as he realised that he would have no easy task with Jimmy, and that he was, after all, an opponent worthy of respect.

When time was called by Manning, not one of Norman's blows had reached Jimmy; some he had dodged, others he had warded off; but Norman had been hit again and again, and by his look of distress and panting breath seemed almost to have been beaten already, as he fell back upon his second.

The spectators were wild with delight. In the decline of boxing among schoolboys, few of them had ever seen a regular fight. There had been plenty of 'scraps' in this very place, between boys usually of a more or less equal age and size, and some of them had been conducted according to the rules of the ring, or to such of them as were known to whoever had conducted the affair. But they had been rather caricatures of fighting than the real thing, and had seldom been fought to a finish. In the case of lower boys, who were more readily encouraged to go for one another, contests, begun on an Homeric scale, had often been dissolved in laughter, as one or other of the protagonists had retired groaning from the scene, with a bloody nose or a damaged mouth. But this was the real thing. Jimmy's science, at least, was recognised, and it was exciting to see him get the better of his adversary by pure cleverness, when so much of the advantage was on the other side. But the fight was not over yet, as some of them thought.

Jimmy sat quietly in his corner of the ring, breathing rather quickly, but not otherwise distressed, and, in fact, feeling very pleased with himself. His backers were also extremely pleased with him. Pilling flapped a towel vigorously in front of his face, with a broad grin on his own, and said: 'It was ripping—perfectly ripping—A1 and top-hole. Go in and finish him, old boy. He's had pretty nearly enough of it already.'

Henderson, more cautious, said: 'Keep on as you've begun, and go on pounding at his body, and reach up to his jaw whenever you get a chance. But don't let him get in at you, or he may land you out altogether. You see, he'll fight better next round.'

In the meantime Norman, hurt, angry, and ashamed, was receiving the attention that he needed on the other side of the ring, and listening to Williams's advice, delivered in the cold, deliberate tone with which he had been accustomed to deal such wounds to Jimmy's sensibilities: 'You've made a fool of yourself. You're not going to beat him by treating him as a kid. If you go on like that, he'll beat you, and won't take long over it. Don't stand in one place. Get away from him if he comes at you.'

It was not encouraging or sympathetic advice; and there was no mention in it of direct attack on Norman's part. Perhaps Williams hesitated to advise him to watch his opportunity and hit out hard at Jimmy. Williams was such an enigma at this time, that it was possible to imagine his sympathies actually against the boy whom he was backing, and had lately made a companion of.

But Norman must have supplied what was missing in the advice himself. He did not quite know how it was, but Jimmy's repeated blows had taken away a good deal of his confidence. They had not been delivered with any great strength, but they had found their mark, and, if they should be repeated long enough, he already felt that the time would come when he would not be able to go on. He felt, however, that any one carefully-judged blow that he might be able to get in would be worth half a dozen of Jimmy's, and he was determined to get more than one in, and to prevent the attack from developing further.

He did not know enough about the game to adopt Williams's advice and put himself in a position on his feet that would enable him to dodge about. He stood firmly as before, when the two of them faced one another, but held his arms in a better way and watched warily for an opening, as Jimmy danced about him, watching and feinting for an opening, too.

This went on for some time, and the spectators began to laugh. Norman always hated to be laughed at, and this stung him to make his effort. He launched out at Jimmy's face with all the strength he could muster. Jimmy just escaped the blow, and was in under him at once, keeping his distance and raining blows on his body, and before he could fully recover himself reaching up and hitting him hard on the point of the chin.

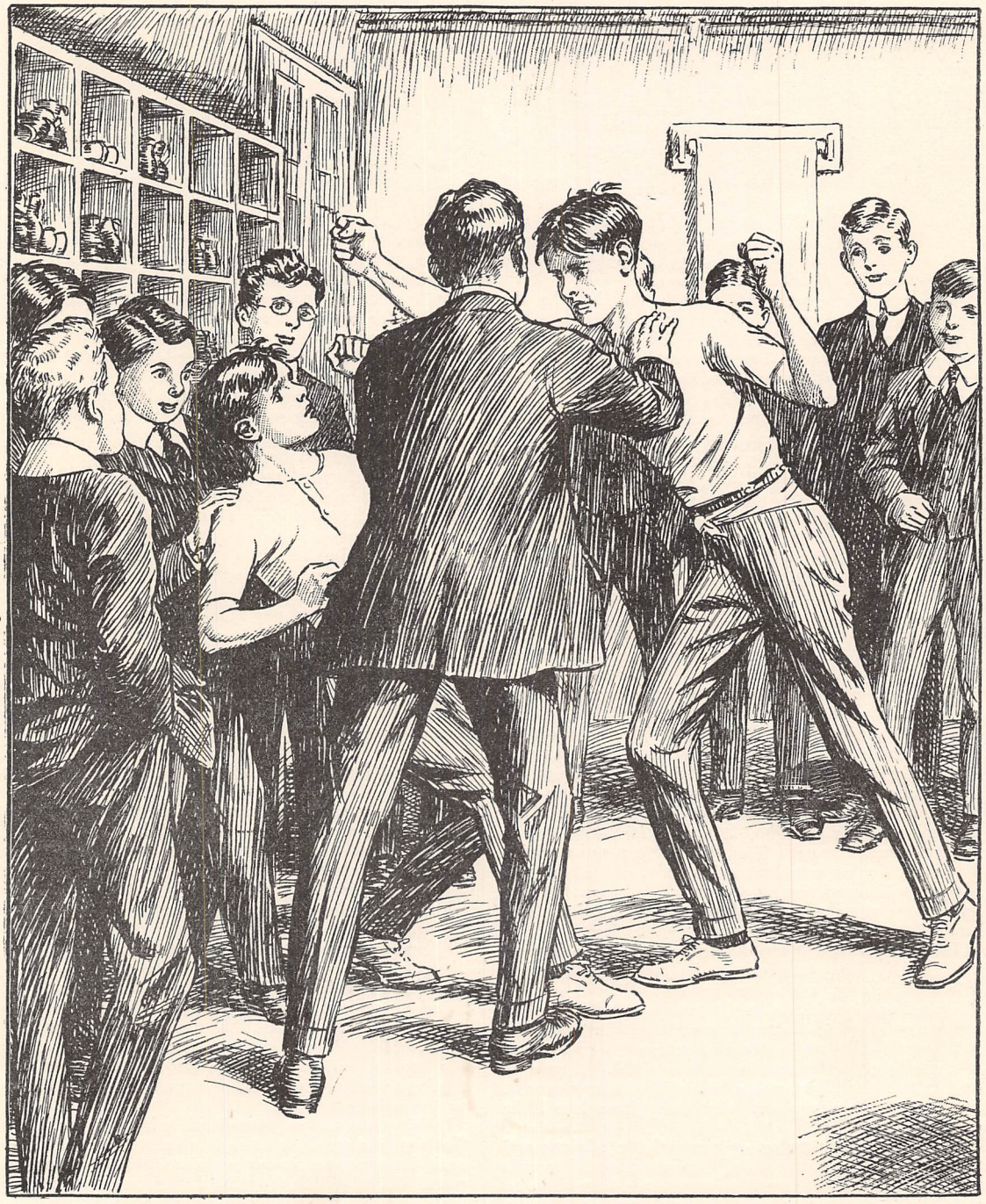
Norman felt the jar, and it sickened him. It also seemed to increase his energy tenfold. When a man who can't swim falls into deep water, he instinctively tries to keep himself afloat by furiously rapid motions of the arms and legs something in the manner of swimming; and so any one who does not know how to fight, but is forced to do so, when his blood is once thoroughly up, hits out in whirlwind style just as instinctively.

This was what Norman did. His arms went like windmills. They left his body open, but the blows came so quickly that Jimmy had no time to take advantage of the openings he gave. It took him all his time to defend himself from the shower of blows, all aimed at his head, and with both fists going at once, or immediately after one another. It was impossible to dodge such an attack as this. It had to be guarded against, and Jimmy's guard was not strong enough. Norman smothered and broke through it, and during the short time that his desperate rally lasted he hit Jimmy all over the face—eyes, nose, mouth—anywhere, and forced him back right to the edge of the ring.

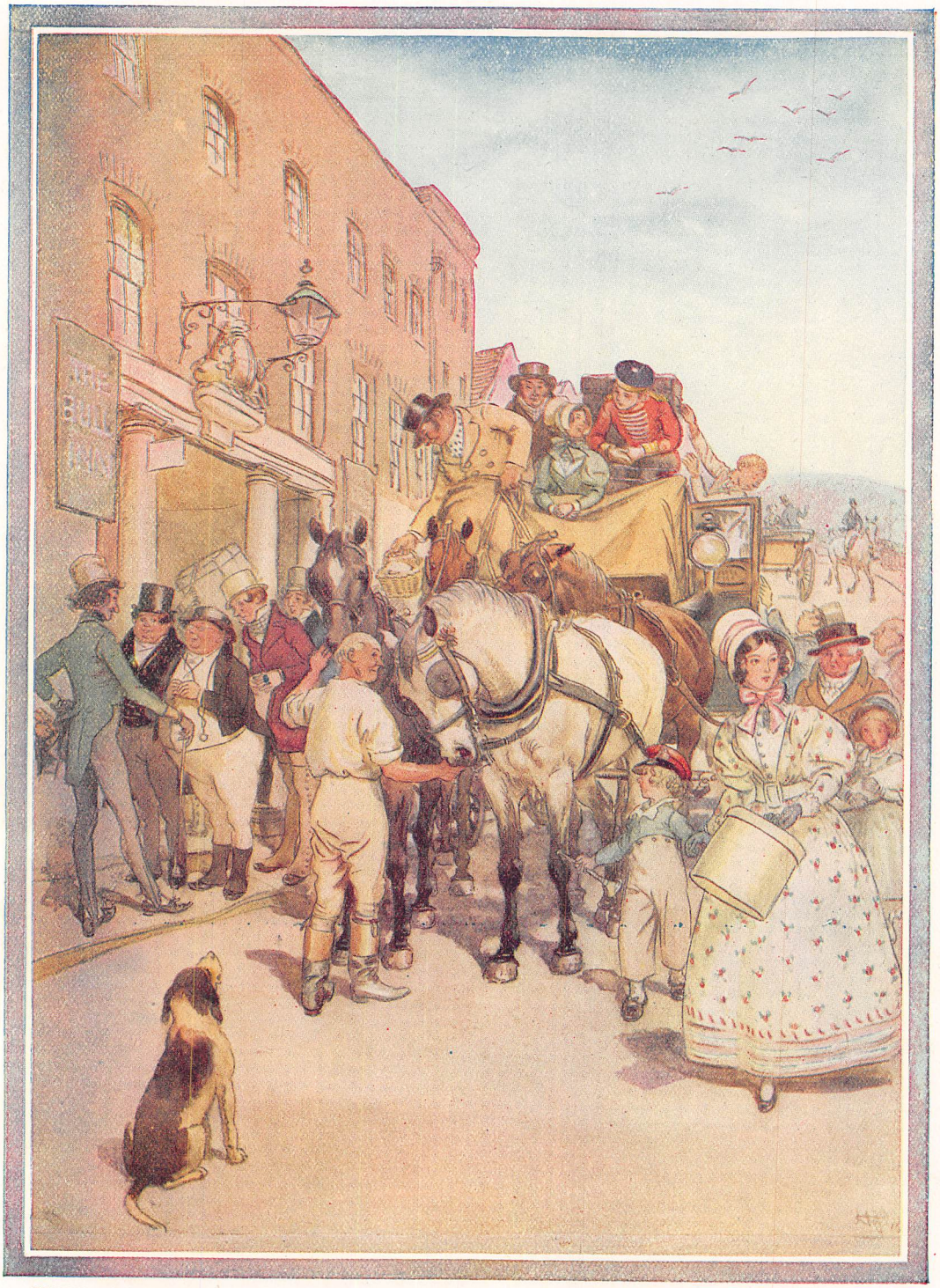
Manning broke between them and put them back into the ring. By that time Norman's force had spent itself, but Jimmy had suffered severely and could only just stand up against a weaker renewal of the same tactics. It was fortunate for him that time was called very soon after. He sank back in his corner gasping and sobbing for breath, and this time he wanted Henderson's and Pilling's ministrations, and was glad enough of the cold water and the fanning.

Pilling was serious enough while he plied his labours. To him it seemed that the tide had turned completely, and Jimmy must be overwhelmed by it in the next round, if indeed he would be able to stand up to it. But Henderson knew rather better. 'He can't keep that sort of thing up,' he said, 'and you've damaged him almost as much as he's damaged you. Try and keep away from him, and let him puff himself.

(*Continued on page* 326.)



"Manning broke between them and put them back into the ring."



CHATTERBOX

MR. PICKWICK INVITES MR. JINGLE TO DINNER AT THE *BULL*, ROCHESTER

(*Pickwick Papers*, Chap. II.)

FROM A DRAWING BY HUGH THOMSON.

"Achmet blew a strange shrill call upon a silver whistle."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 316.)

ALL day long the search continued, but without result. At intervals, a couple of the little parties would sight each other, and make signals to convey the fact that they had been unsuccessful. Towards noon, Achmet and the boys rested for a few hours under a straggling group of palms, and shared a meal of bread and dates. Then they set out again upon that fruitless scouring of the desert, which was so like the proverbial search for a needle in a bundle of hay, until the sun began to set, a great red ball in the golden, cloudless sky.

They were then at a considerable distance from Mulai Hafid's camp, and Achmet philosophically decided that they should bivouac where they were for the night.

He chose a sheltered spot in the angle of two great red rocks, and here the simple preparations for sleep were made. There were no materials for a fire, but the two Moors arranged to watch in turns, whilst their companions slept.

The horses were tethered close at hand, and Dick and Sandy were provided with the blankets which had been carried strapped upon the saddles; whilst Achmet and the other Moor wrapped themselves closely in their long burnouses.

The boys lay wakeful for some time, watching those unnaturally huge white stars which blazed in the clear sky overhead. Presently Sandy's heavy breathing told its tale, and Dick, anxious and troubled as he was, felt drowsiness creeping over him. His last conscious impression was of the dark figure of the Moorish soldier, musket on knee, silhouetted against the skyline. An instant later, he, too, was soundly asleep.

It was perhaps rather more than a couple of hours later, towards the coldest, deadest part of the night, that Sandy woke and blinked up wonderingly at the sky.

It was with something of a shiver that the boy realised where he was, and he rolled over towards Dick for company. But only the disordered, unoccupied blanket showed where his brother had lain.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sandy scrambled to his feet, still half asleep, oppressed with a feeling of nightmare. He stumbled across to where Achmet lay, and shook his shoulder, stammering out entreaties for him to wake.

The Moor was aroused and alert in an instant, listening to Sandy's news, with no trace of sleep in his keen dark eyes.

'Achmet . . . Achmet . . .' Sandy was almost unintelligible in his dismayed excitement. 'Dick's gone too . . . he isn't here . . . he's gone. . . .'

Achmet was on his feet in an instant, discovering for himself that the fact was as Sandy had described it. Moreover, he saw something else which the boy had not realised.

The sentinel, whom Dick in his last waking moments had seen so erect and alert against the night sky, had fallen forward in a huddled heap upon the ground; about his head and shoulders a dark stain dyed the sand.

Achmet turned the man over, and stared down into his face intently, examining an ugly wound at the back of his head. 'He was struck down from behind,' he said, gravely. 'But I do not think that he is dead. By the will of Allah he may recover, and tell us what passed, but I do not think he will regain consciousness yet; perhaps not for many hours. And in the meantime . . .'

'We must find Dick—we must . . . we must!' Sandy interrupted. The boy was very near to breaking down under this new blow. The mysterious loss of his newly-discovered father had been bad enough, but the disappearance of Dick was far worse—Dick from whom he had never been separated for a day in their lives—Dick, that steady, resourceful elder brother upon whom the younger boy so depended. 'Oh, Achmet, where *can* he have gone?' he cried. 'D'you suppose it was a wild beast?'

'It was no wild beast, but a man which struck Hosein thus,' the Moor answered. 'Nay, I have no doubt but that the same evil persons who captured the Sidi Harland himself have now stolen your brother; where we find one, we shall also find the other, be assured of that.'

'Then let's hurry to look for them . . . it can't be long ago . . . they won't have got very far . . .' Sandy cried excitedly.

'Of what avail should we two be against perhaps a dozen or more of armed men,' said Achmet with an undoubted reasonableness which was rather provoking. 'We must wait until daylight, that is certain—and moreover until others of my men have joined us.'

'Oh, but we can't wait . . . let's track them down, anyway . . . find where they are!' Sandy protested indignantly.

'How can we do that in such darkness? Nay, young master, we must wait.'

And waiting was just the most difficult thing imaginable in Sandy's opinion. All through the two or three hours which remained before dawn broke, the boy paced to and fro in the darkness, chafing and miserable, sick and cold with suspense, staring out into the desert, listening until the very silence thundered like distant hoof-beats in his strained ears.

Achmet, meanwhile, tended the wounded man, bathing the deep cut and bandaging it with strips torn from his burnouse, and performing the whole business with a deftness extraordinary in a one-armed man. He also persuaded Sandy to eat and drink a little, and then sat down, immobile as a bronze statue, staring in front of him with grave, dark eyes.

After what seemed like centuries to fretting, anxious Sandy, the dawn came, clear and scarlet.

Climbing to the summit of the rocks against which they had camped, Achmet stood upright and blew a strange shrill call upon a silver whistle, three times repeated.

(*Continued on page* 334.)

THE WOODEN SPOON.

A Swedish Fable.

THERE was once a Wooden Spoon so prettily shaped and carved that every one who saw her admired and praised her. This made the Spoon very vain. She became discontented, and longed to be a *silver spoon*.

'Dear lady,' she said one day to her mistress, 'I feel that I am too good to remain for ever in the kitchen with the servants. They have such rude manners, and

handle me so roughly. *Do*, madam, make me *look*, at any rate, like a silver spoon.'

The lady, willing to please her pretty Wooden Spoon, took her to a goldsmith, and told him to overlay her with silver. This he did, and now the Spoon shone like the sun. She was placed in the plate-basket with the real silver. Her former companions she treated with scorn. She desired the tea-spoons to call her 'Aunt,' and pretended to be first cousin to the silver forks. But though she put herself forward, and often contrived to be uppermost in the basket, she was never taken out with the other spoons to lie on the lady's table. Even when there were guests, and *all* the silver was used, the silvered-over Wooden Spoon was left in the basket—alone.

Again she complained to her mistress. 'Madam,' she said, 'why do the servants so shamefully neglect me? Why do I never appear on your table with the others? I shine more brightly than all the rest, and such treatment is most unfair.'

'The servants know that you are not silver,' replied the lady.

'*How* do they know?'

'By the difference in weight.'

'Can't I be made heavier?'

Again the good-natured lady carried the Wooden Spoon to the goldsmith, and asked him if he could make the Wooden Spoon as heavy as real silver would be.

'I can only do so,' replied the goldsmith, 'by putting a piece of lead inside the handle.'

'Oh, dear!' thought the Spoon, 'in order to do that, he will have to pierce my heart! But I shall not mind the pain if only I can pass for a real silver spoon.'

The goldsmith then bored deep into the Spoon's heart —that is to say, her handle, and poured in molten lead, which soon hardened.

'For honour's sake!' said the poor, silly thing to herself, as she felt the pain. Then she was re-silvered, and sent back to the plate-basket.

And now the Spoon had her wish, and went with the others to the lady's table. She would have been perfectly happy but for that dreadful lump of lead in her heart.

By-and-by the lady who owned the spoons (and everything else in the house) died. Once the Wooden Spoon would have felt sorry, but now she could not help feeling rather glad. It had made her so uncomfortable when she was glittering on the table to think that one person present knew her secret. And whenever her mistress took another spoon, the Wooden One felt jealous, and said to herself: 'That is because she knows I am only a wooden spoon silvered over, with a piece of lead inside.'

So her mistress's death was a relief to the Wooden Spoon. 'Now,' she thought, '*nobody* will know that I am not what I seem.'

Her satisfaction did not last long. The lady's property was sold, and the silver was bought by a goldsmith, who intended to melt it down and then to fashion it anew. When the Wooden Spoon saw the furnace she was terrified. 'They are going to burn us!' she exclaimed to her companions, who seemed not to care. 'Soon we shall be nothing but ashes. What cruelty! How *can* you be so calm?'

'Because the fire will do us not harm, but good,' replied an old silver spoon and fork reposing side by side. 'We know, for we have been through the furnace several times in the course of our lives. After we have been melted down we shall reappear in a more attractive form. There is nothing to fear.'

But these words brought no comfort to the unhappy Spoon. *Silver* might not burn, but she knew that wood would do so. 'I see,' she said to herself, 'that it is not only by brightness and by weight that silver is known.'

When the goldsmith took her up to cast her into the furnace, she implored him to spare her. 'I,' she said falsely, 'am a silver spoon, but I am not made of the same sort of silver as are these others. I am of a superior and more delicate kind, which cannot bear heat. If you put me into that dreadful furnace, I shall vanish away in smoke.'

'Perhaps you are tin, then?' said the man.

'How can you think so meanly of me?'

'Or you may be lead!'

'Sir, you could easily see if I were lead.'

'I'm going to see now,' said the goldsmith. He tried to bend the Spoon's handle, which instantly snapped into two pieces, for wood cannot stand bending any more than it can stand melting; and when the handle snapped, out dropped the lump of lead.

'Ha! ha!' cried the smith; 'you are nothing but a wooden spoon silvered over.'

Strange to say, this remark did not hurt the Spoon's feelings. As soon as the lead tumbled out of her she felt wonderfully light-hearted and happy. That, of course, was because the heavy weight had gone.

'Yes,' she confessed, 'I am only a wooden spoon. Please take off my silver coat and have me mended. I will gladly spend the rest of my life in a kitchen, ladling out porridge for the servants. I have learned how very foolish it is of a wooden spoon to pretend to be a silver one.' E. D.

A JOURNEY TO GO.

IV.—LONDON TO DOVER.

PART I.

FROM London to Dover, that shall be our next journey, and we are starting out on a well-trodden road, for this is the chief highway to and from France, and, all through the ages of English history, it has been thronged with travellers and has echoed to the marching feet of armed men.

The route of War and of Pageantry, that is what the Dover road may be called, and along it we journey back into mediæval times, and on our way catch glimpses in imagination of one strange, brilliant picture after another. Kings and princes riding on richly caparisoned horses, knights in dented mail, homeward bound from the French campaigns, servants and men-at-arms, prisoners of war with their guards, and carts laden with booty—all these we meet, and are reminded of the grim centuries of warfare that stretched between the Norman Conquest and the day, not so very long ago, when the King of England erased the golden lilies of France from his coat-of-arms.

Seven hundred years of strife: it seems almost impossible to realise it to-day, when our former foes are our allies and friends; but, even in those stormy times there were intervals of peace, and now and again on the Dover road, we must stand aside and watch the splendid procession of some foreign princess on her

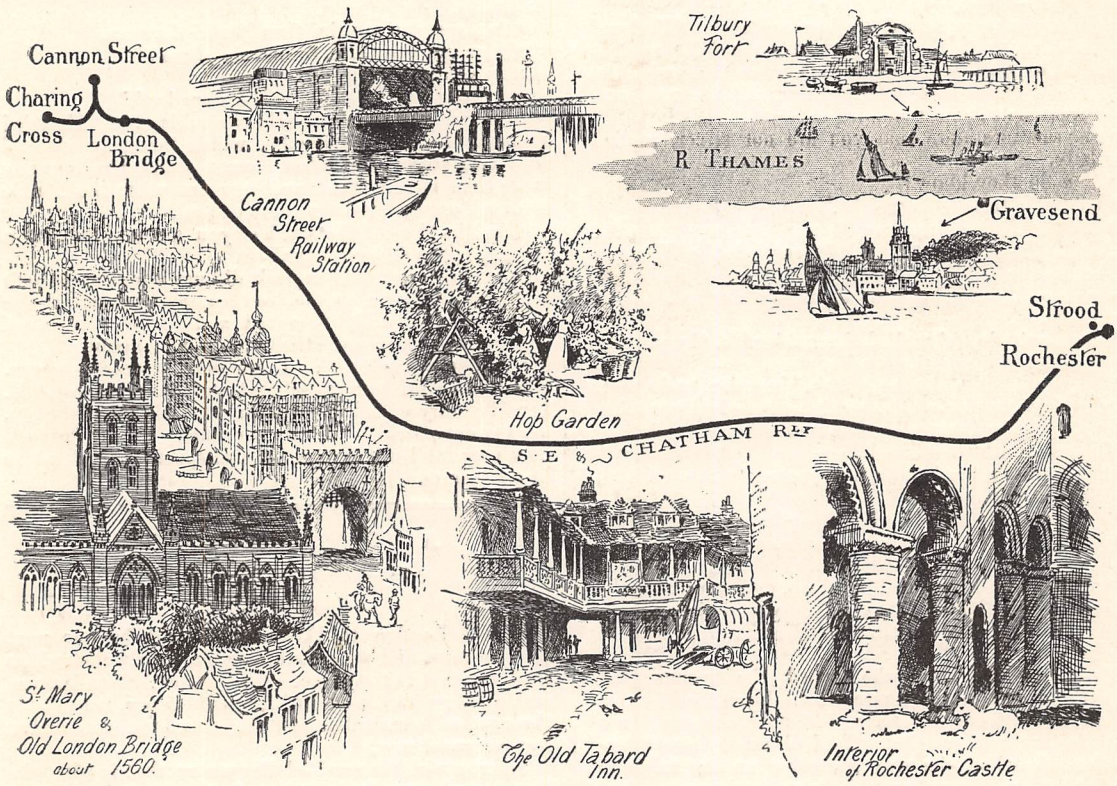
way to a royal wedding and a coronation in Westminster Abbey. Then we see a train of pilgrims, some travelling mountebanks with their apes and dancing bears, or, perhaps, a wild rabble of peasant soldiers, the lawless Men of Kent, roused to rebellion and hastening hot-foot to batter on the closed portcullis of London Bridge.

But although this highway seems pre-eminently to belong to the Middle Ages, it yet has an older history, for it is none other than the famous Watling Street, the Roman road which the conquerors cut through the length of Britain; and in even earlier times it is believed that there was an ancient thoroughfare taking this same course.

And now we must go back to London, and begin our journey in the orthodox fashion, by taking tickets at one or other of the stations of the South-Eastern Railway.

Cannon Street, Charing Cross, London Bridge, which shall we choose, for the names of all three have an old-world, romantic sound? Cannon Street is just opposite our original starting-point, the London Stone; Charing Cross is set about with memories of Queen Alianor and her long funeral journey; and London Bridge—yes, that must be our choice to-dav, for it has always been the gateway of the Watling Street, and, although the old structure with its quaint shops and fortified entrances has been swept away, the name and the traditions of the famous bridge still remain.

Try and picture London as it was six hundred years ago, when the Thames rushed like a mill-stream through the narrow arches of London Bridge; when old St. Paul's, the greatest Gothic cathedral in the world, towered over the city, and when Chaucer's merry pilgrims thronged the streets on their way to Canterbury. We are going by the same route to-day, and, although very little remains of old London, there is still one building that has come down to us from those far-off days. This is the church of St. Saviour's, Southwark, or, to give it its right name, St. Mary Overie, which is situated just below the level of the present roadway, on the southern bank of the Thames. Quite close at hand is the Borough High Street, where, not very long ago, the Tabard Inn could still be seen.



From London to Dover (First Stage).

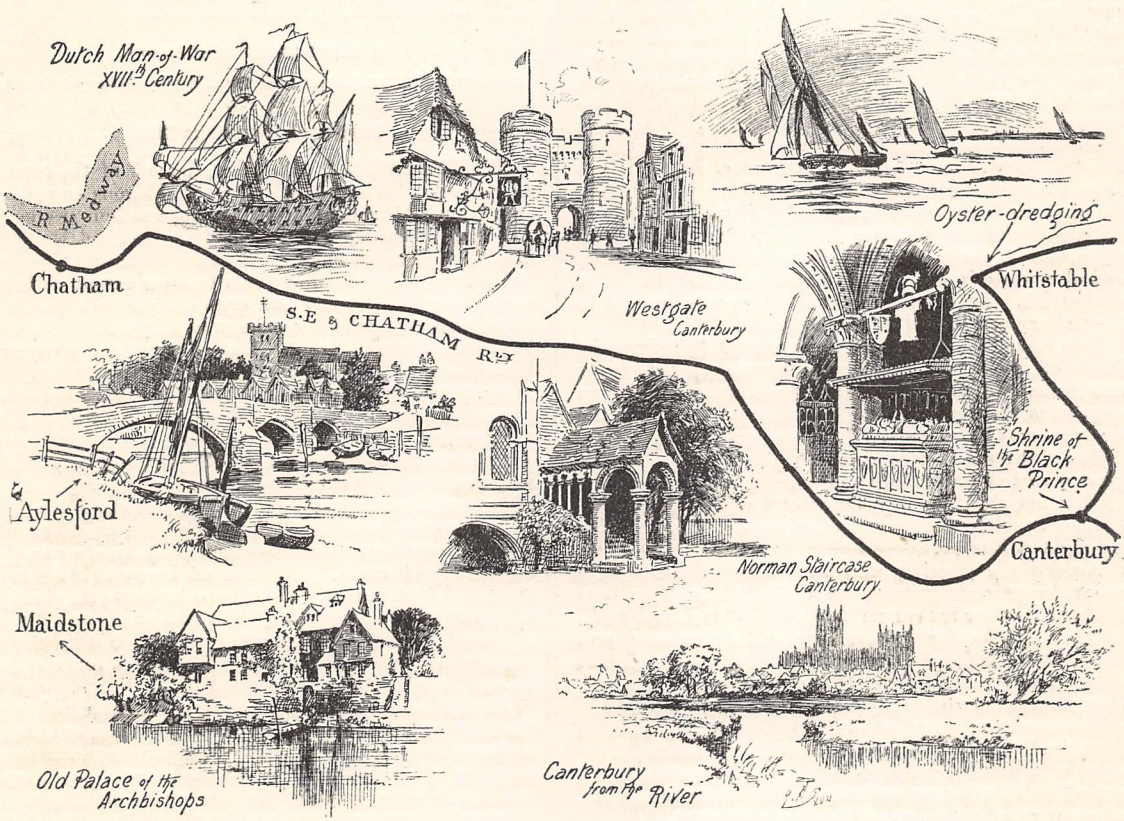
From London Bridge Station there are several routes by which Dover can be reached, but the most interesting, and also the oldest, is that which takes us through Rochester, Faversham, and Canterbury, for here the railway, for the most part, follows the straight line of the Watling Street itself. It was a long, tedious journey in the leisurely mediæval times, but now the train carries us along swiftly, and we only catch fleeting glimpses of the wood and valleys and hop gardens of Kent.

The first important town that we reach is Rochester, with its cathedral, Norman castle, and fine bridge over the Medway. In early days there was only a wooden bridge, but in 1387 this was replaced by a 'faire stone bridge,' built by two knights who had gained much

booty in the French wars. This new bridge, as it was called, lasted for nearly five hundred years, and consisted of twenty-one arches, each of which was kept in repair by one of the parishes of the diocese.

Rochester Castle remains, but now it is a show-place, and not a great fortress as it was in the days when it was besieged by Wiliam Rufus, and then by King John when he was fighting against his rebellious barons.

In the reign of Richard II. the castle was captured by Wat Tyler's rebels, who seized the Governor, Sir John Newton, put him into a boat and dispatched him up the Thames to London with a message to the King.



From London to Dover (First Stage).

'Sir John, if you do not as we will have you, ye are but dead.' With these words the men of Kent dismissed their prisoner on his errand, and it is evident that Newton had no choice in the matter, for Froissart, describing the incident, says that 'in Rochester the rebels had good cheer, for the people of the town were of the same sect.'

Adjoining Rochestar is the busy town of Chatham, one of the principal naval stations in England. It is also one of the oldest, for it was founded in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Lambarde, a writer of the sixteenth century, visited the Dockyard in 1596, and it is very interesting to find how ship-names have come down to us. This is the list of vessels which he gives as having been in the 'Harborow of the Navie Royall at Chatham: the *Victory*, the *Warspyte*, the *Vanguard*, the *Defiaunce*, the *Dreadnaught*, and the *Swiftsure*.'

Those were the great days of England, when the Invincible Armada had just been defeated, and Britain's rule over the waves was undisputed; but terrible times were at hand. Only seventy years later a Dutch fleet, under Admiral de Ruyter, burnt the shipping in the Thames, captured one of the largest English men-of-war, and sailed up the Medway as far as Chatham.

Samuel Pepys, in his *Diary*, gives a description of the consternation in London when tidings of this disaster were received, and there is no doubt that, had the enemy realised the impotence of the once powerful British Navy, he might have pushed his way to the metropolis itself.

We must continue our journey now, and, a little while after leaving Rochester, come to Sittingbourne, where Henry V. was welcomed on his triumphant homeward progress after the Battle of Agincourt. Old writers tell us that not only the King, but his whole retinue, were entertained at a banquet, which only cost nine shillings and twopence, including wine. Certainly provisions were cheap in those fifteenth-century days.

Not far away from Sittingbourne is Faversham, a place which, ever since the time of Queen Elizabeth,

has been noted for its manufactory of gunpowder. In 1781 a terrible explosion occurred, the noise of which was heard twenty miles away; and a little earlier we read that the mills were constantly at work, night and day, and that 'the men relieved each other in sets or parties.'

And now we come to Canterbury, the principal cathedral city in England, the place where St. Augustine preached to his ten thousand Saxon converts, where the first Christian church was built, and where many great historical events and many terrible tragedies have taken place.

Canterbury has had two martyred archbishops, and every one has heard how Thomas Becket was slain in the Cathedral itself by the knights who wished to please their master, King Henry III., by ridding him of the 'turbulent priest.' The story of St. Alphege is, perhaps, less well known, and to read of it we must turn back to the pages of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. There we learn that the Danes, who were ravaging England, besieged Canterbury, and that the city, which might have defended itself successfully, was betrayed into the hands of the barbarous Northmen by Elfman, the Abbot of St. Augustine's Monastery. A terrible massacre took place, and Alphege, the Archbishop, was taken prisoner, and afterwards murdered in the camp of the Danes at Greenwich. Later the body of Alphege was brought to Canterbury and buried in the Cathedral.

This tragedy happened in the year 1011, before the death of Becket; and both events seem very far away now, when we visit peaceful Canterbury, although we are shown the spot where St. Thomas was killed and the crypt where King Henry did his strange penance.

The death of Becket was the beginning of Canterbury's great period of importance and prosperity, for the people of England glorified the memory of the ambitious Archbishop, and his tomb became an object of veneration throughout Europe.

Among the pilgrims who flocked to the shrine were many kings and princes, both English and foreign: Richard I., after his escape from captivity; Henry V., to give thanks for the victory of Agincourt; and King Louis VII. of France, who had known Becket during his lifetime. This last-named monarch, it is said, brought a wonderful carbuncle as an offering, but at the last moment repented of his intention and decided to keep the jewel for himself. The precious stone, however, more pious than its owner, sprang of its own accord out of the King's ring and attached itself to the shrine, where it remained as one of its chief treasures.

This story we may accept or not, as we choose; but certain it is that the tomb of St. Thomas must have been among the wonders of Europe, and at one time a pack of fierce dogs was kept to guard it at night. Erasmus, the Dutch scholar, who visited the Cathedral in the sixteenth century, says that 'gold was the meanest thing to be seen,' and that many of the jewels were as large as goose's eggs.

Sir John Froissart, on his way to London in the reign of Richard II., stopped to see the famous tomb. 'It was on a Thursday morning,' he writes, 'at nine of the clock, I came to Canterbury, to St. Thomas' shrine, and to the tomb of the noble Prince of Wales, who is interred most richly. There I made my offering.'

Becket's magnificent shrine has vanished now, with its inlaid work, its gold and precious stones, and its hundreds of little silver bells; but the other tomb of which the old chronicler writes still remains in Canterbury Cathedral, and above it may be seen the shield, helmet, and gauntlets which were carried in the funeral procession of the Black Prince. The hero's sword was removed by Oliver Cromwell, but its empty scabbard can still be seen.

Round about the tomb, carved in stone, are the three feathers won at Crecy, and the meek motto, 'Ich Diene' ('I Serve'), which is still proudly borne by every Prince of Wales.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate, etc., etc.

(Continued from page 319.)

JIMMY had felt frightened at the end of the second round. He knew that he was not strong enough to stand much of such an attack as Norman had produced, and some of the blows that he had received had damaged him, though he was more lucky than he knew in having broken the force of all of them to some extent with his arms; for if Norman had once landed an unchecked blow, with the wild force he was using, Jimmy must have gone down before it. But as he sat and recovered himself, under the fanning and the sponging, his momentary funk disappeared and his spirit rose again to meet what was coming. His bruises did not hurt for the moment; that would come later. He felt vigorous and sure again as he took his stand for the third round.

Norman had not completely recovered from the effects of his terrific exertions, but he still had enough in him to be prepared to repeat his tactics of the second round, to beat down Jimmy's defence, and finish him by superior strength and reach. All idea of inequality between them had disappeared. He was no longer trying to lick a presumptuous small boy, but to win a fight with an opponent who met him on equal terms. But he had to win, or be eternally disgraced. That much remained to him of the notions he had started with.

Jimmy had to keep away from his violent attack, and tire him out, before he could expect his superior science to have its effect. There was no using it against these slogging windmill tactics. So he danced round and round the ring keeping his fists up to guard against Norman's blows and drawing him after him all the time, so that Norman got wilder and wilder and his rushes more and more furious. His 'wind' also suffered greatly, and so did his temper, as the circle of spectators laughed with pure enjoyment at the circus performance, and encouraged him ironically not to dance the Lancers any more, but to go in and win.

Norman made a desperate rush and nearly cornered Jimmy. He hit out wildly. Jimmy had his fists up, as he had been taught, but the blow glided off and hit him on the shoulder. He reeled under it for a moment, but recovered himself in time to get back with a right and left which sent Norman, insecure on his feet and touched in the wind, staggering back in his turn. For a moment they both hung back. Then Norman gathered himself for a sudden rush, and swung both his arms up, making for Jimmy's face. Jimmy, forgetting for the moment to use his fists for defence and not his arms, could not break

the blow enough. It took him down the cheek on to the shoulder where he had been hit before, and its force brought him on to his knee on the ground, where he bent forward on his hands, unable to recover himself from the shock.

Norman, knowing nothing and caring nothing about the rules of fighting, and seeing him at his mercy, was about to grapple him and finish him off in the manner of boys 'scrapping' furiously. There was a loud outcry from the connoisseurs of the ring, and Manning got quickly between them, warding Norman off.

Then he began to count slowly, looking at his watch —one—two—three—four—five—six. Jimmy tried to struggle up to his feet, and when six was counted he did so and stood unsteadily, dazed and distressed, while cheer after cheer went up, until they were stopped by a peremptory word from Manning. 'We don't want Stanhope down here,' he said. 'I'll see fair play all right.'

The slight interruption brought the two-minute round to an end. Manning looked at his watch again and said 'Time!' Jimmy had nearly been finished, and it was lucky for him that this had come at the end of the round, for he could have faced nothing further at that moment.

When they stood up for the fourth round all Norman's wasted effort was coming back on him, as well as the punishment Jimmy had succeeded in inflicting on him. He breathed in short gasps, and there was a singing in his ears, and all the boys round him seemed confused and dim. But he was still strung up to determination. He must finish it now, for he wouldn't be able to go on any longer.

Jimmy had had more than enough of it. He was dazed, too, and his eye was beginning to swell. Probably he thought, too, that he could not go on for more than another round; but he hardly knew what he thought. He meant to hold out as long as he could, and he kept on dinning into himself that he must keep his fists up and try to receive blows on them, instead of shielding his face with his arms, which is instinctive to everybody. It was the one point he remembered out of all that had been taught him. The rest that he had learnt came natural to him now, and did not need to be remembered. But this he had never quite mastered. He did not try to think why it was so important to remember it, but he knew that it was important.

Norman came at him. He held his knuckles firmly and felt Norman's fists jar on them. Norman fell back, not knowing what had happened to him. His arm was numb. Jimmy went out at him, landed a blow on his chest and aimed a second at his face. In an instinctive effort to ward off the second blow, Norman turned a little to the left and Jimmy hit him again, as hard as his failing strength would allow, on the chest.

Norman spun round a little sideways, and fell over his feet, which were planted solidly, without any spring of the ankles or knees. He went sprawling in the ring, his wind knocked right out, and lay there gasping.

'One—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—ten.'

Norman made no effort to rise. The fight was over.

CHAPTER XIX.

Jimmy could hardly understand what had happened at first. He stood looking down at Norman lying on the ground, and slowly recovering his breath, and did not immediately realise that he had beaten him. He was pretty well done himself, but ready to go on a little farther. Nor did all the spectators of the fight quite understand that it was over. But some of them did, when Manning had counted up to ten and put his watch into his pocket. There was a great cheer, and an inrush of those anxious to congratulate Jimmy on his victory.

Manning was the first to do so. He shook hands solemnly with Jimmy, and said: 'Well fought, sir. I congratulate you.' Then, with a glance at the prostrate Norman, he went quickly out.

He was followed by most of the older boys, whose dignity did not allow of the sharing in the general jubilation of all the lower boys. But Williams did not leave with the rest of them.

Norman struggled to his feet, still panting, looking very much distressed and ashamed of himself.

Williams came forward slowly to where Jimmy was standing, surrounded by his sympathisers, who were patting him on the back, and rather incommoding him with their attentions, for he was now beginning to feel the gruelling he had gone through. His bruises were very sore, and his eye was almost entirely closed up.

A silence fell as Williams came up. He seemed to have something to say. He looked at Norman, who now stood unsteadily on his feet, and said to him and Jimmy both: 'It's all over now; you had better shake hands.'

Jimmy held out his hand at once. He felt no sort of rancour against Norman, though he was glad enough to have beaten him.

Norman took his hand unwillingly. He had been beaten in fair fight by a boy much younger and smaller than himself, and he hated it. But he knew that he would be expected to behave as a sportsman, and must not refuse the customary handshake.

'That's all right, then,' said Williams, when the two boys had shaken hands. 'I want to say something to you fellows. I backed Norman because there was nobody else to do it. But I'm not sorry Henshaw beat him. He beat me, you know, a few weeks ago, and I'm not sorry for that either.'

Having said this in his usual quiet, nonchalant manner, Williams strolled out. Those who had heard his curious speech scarcely knew what to make of it, and looked at one another with question and surprise. Williams was always something of an enigma, especially since he had been 'downed' by Jimmy, and had afterwards pulled him out of the water.

'What he really means,' said Henderson, when he and Scott and Jimmy and Pilling discussed it afterwards, 'is that he's sick at having made such a brute of himself, and thinks everybody might as well know it.'

'It's a climb down,' suggested Scott.

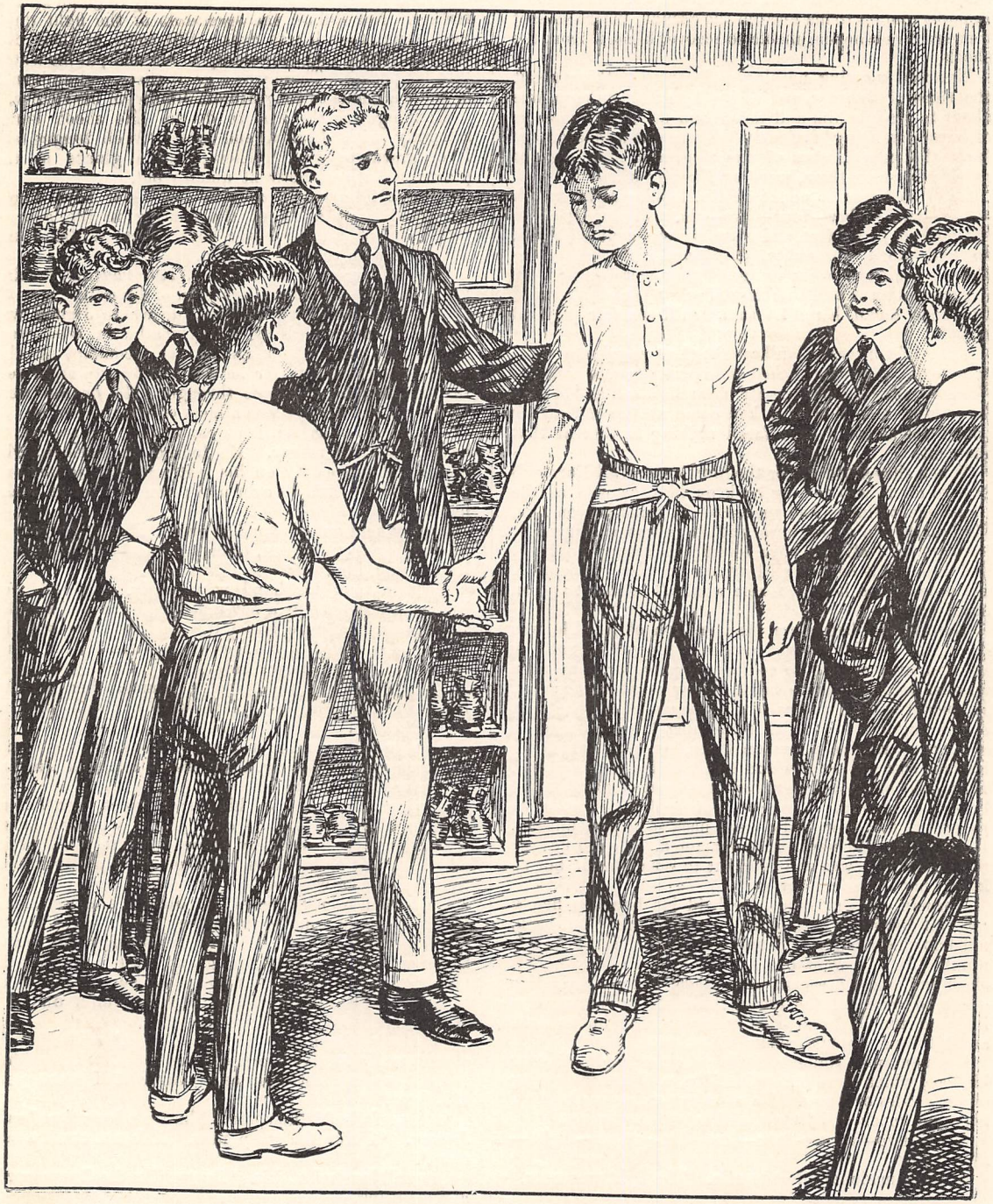
'I think it's rather decent of him,' said Pilling, always ready to give everybody their due. 'I shouldn't keep it up against him any longer if I were you, Henshaw.'

'I haven't had it up against him for a long time,' said Jimmy. 'I like the chap now. He's not at all a bad chap.'

They all laughed at this. 'Do you like the Conqueror?' asked Pilling.

'Perhaps I shouldn't much if he had really been the Conqueror,' said Jimmy. 'I don't mind him now. It depends on how he behaves.'

(*Continued on page* 330.)



"Norman took his hand unwillingly."

"Norman had collared him, and given him two or three great clouts on the head."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall.

(Continued from page 327.)

IT was not known how Norman intended to behave for some days. He sulked. The story of the fight had got all over the school, and he had to put up with a good deal of comment on the subject of his defeat at the hands of the newest boy in the school, which by no means added to his good opinion of himself. He had certainly lost all the influence he had gained amongst the Lower boys by the free use of his clever tongue, and as that sort of influence was what he had spent his nearly three years of school life in trying to gain, the loss of it was very disagreeable to him. He was furious with Williams, too, who had let him down by the speech he had made after the fight.

But Williams did not appear to care for that in the least: he went his own quiet way and made advances to nobody. But he had done the right thing, and by-and-by it was generally recognised by his equals that his serious offence had been wiped out and that it was for them to take him back into their favour. This they did, and Williams, from being one of the most dreaded and disliked boys in the school, became rather a hero. His first speech after the fight was accepted as a full apology for his misdeeds, and as he never practised them again during the time he stayed at Whyborough, their effect was soon forgotten. He was very good at games, and worked off the ill-humours that were part of his curious nature in that way. Williams had learnt his lesson, and, directly or indirectly, it was Jimmy who had taught it to him. This was not a bad achievement for the newest boy in the school, and Jimmy was indeed becoming rather a well-known person at Whyborough. If he could keep his head and not make mistakes, he bid fair to become the same sort of healthy influence that Henderson already was amongst the boys of his own standing.

Unfortunately, however, he did make a mistake at this time—not a very serious mistake, but one that did away for a time with the effects of his late achievements.

His fight with Norman had been so well fought, and was so much talked about for a time, that Jimmy became rather swollen-headed about it. He prided himself particularly on the magnanimous way in which he had shaken hands with Norman after the fight, feeling no rancour against him and being willing to treat him just like everybody else now he had beaten him.

This attitude is easy enough for a victor, and there is nothing particularly praiseworthy in it. It is not so easy for the beaten party, and was made much less easy for Norman by the fact of his having been beaten by some one so much younger and smaller than himself. The disgrace of it bit into him, but he would have got over it and returned to a normal frame of mind if he had been given time. Boys' memories are short, and there is so much varied incident in school life, that one interest is soon crowded out by another. Norman's defeat would have been forgotten in a short time and he could have recovered himself.

For the first few days, however, he sulked, as has been said. He went moping about, with his hands in his pockets, and escaped the society of his fellows as far as he could. He had nothing to reply when he was chaffed about his defeat, and in a very short time he was chaffed no longer. It would have been like hitting a man who was down. It was just then that he was beginning to recover himself.

But Jimmy chose to consider himself badly treated in having expressed his forgiveness of Norman, and Norman not having accepted it in the spirit in which it had been offered. He began to chaff Norman himself whenever he met him. 'Aren't you going to say "Good morning"?' he would ask, as Norman passed him with glum and averted looks. Or, 'Why can't you behave like a sportsman?' And Pilling would laugh and add an ironic question on his own account. But Henderson, when he was present at one of these encounters, said, 'Oh, why can't you leave the fellow alone? You've downed him. That ought to be enough.'

But the fact was that Jimmy was a little disappointed at the sudden drop that had taken place in the general notice of him. For two days the attention of the whole house and a great part of the school had been concentrated on him; but after that he was taken for granted, and expected to fall back into his proper place as a Lower boy, and this he found it hard to do. So he went on tormenting Norman, perhaps with the idea in the back of his mind of provoking another fight, and so renewing his period of glory.

One afternoon Jimmy had been running on the track, with Henderson and one or two others, and they were standing together when Norman came out ready to run. He was passing them by, as usual, with averted looks, when Jimmy, who was standing a little in front of the others, said: 'Hullo! here's the Conqueror! I say, I wish you wouldn't keep on turning up your nose at me. You'll find me quite a nice chap if you take the trouble to know me.'

Norman turned on him suddenly. 'I'm hanged if I'm going to stand any more of your cheek,' he said, and went for him vigorously.

Jimmy was taken utterly by surprise. He had no time to remember any of his science. Norman had collared him, and given him two or three great clouts on the head before he could do anything to defend himself, much less attack in his turn.

In fact, he had given him a licking, in the way that a big boy does give a licking to a small one, by 'smacking his head.' And, having done it, he walked away, leaving Jimmy so surprised that the others all burst out laughing at his expression.

'Serve you jolly well right,' said Henderson. 'Now perhaps you won't think you're the most important fellow at Whyborough any longer.'

CHAPTER XX.

The competition in *Wilson's Weekly* for which Bertram had entered himself, backed by the whole House, was over, and its results anxiously expected. The House had certainly done very well in it. There could be no doubt that nearly all their solutions were correct, but of course it would be in the few very difficult ones that the test would come. One of these had been the one to which Jimmy had supplied a solution on the first evening of his arrival at Whyborough. As Bertram wisely kept all solutions to himself and the other House prefects, for fear of leakage, none of the other boys knew all that had been sent in. But the difficult ones were constantly being canvassed, and it was generally known when some sort of a solution had

been found for any of them. Jimmy's discovery was known, and as nobody else had since succeeded in finding a reading for that particular hieroglyphic and he had loyally kept his to himself, he derived a good deal of kudos for his sharpness, and his opinion on other difficult problems received considerable weight. With these, however, he was just as much at sea as the rest; but it was known that some sort of solution had been discovered for all the puzzles and had been sent in by Bertram.

Hope ran high. The Lower boys, already anticipating the amount of the prize that the House was likely to get, scarcely ever put it down as less than a thousand pounds, and some enthusiastic spirits thought it might run to as much as ten thousand.

The money was to be spent for the good of the House. Bertram had made that quite clear. They might be able to get a swimming-bath of their own, if Mr. Stanhope would give up the ground in his garden. Or a squash-racket court. Or perhaps both. Somebody suggested a stable, with half-a-dozen horses; somebody else a motor-car; somebody else a neat little theatre, in which companies from London could be invited down to perform; somebody else a House tuck-shop, in which free tuck should be provided for the boys of Stanhope's in perpetuity.

The paper which contained all the solutions arrived by post one morning at breakfast-time. Several boys subscribed to it, and there were enough copies to enable everybody to satisfy themselves upon the puzzling points. The winners in the competition, it was stated, would be announced in the following number, which was something of a disappointment. However, it was possible to find out by an examination of the solutions whether the House had succeeded in arriving at all of them.

Only Bertram and the other Prefects were in a position to judge of this, as they only knew all that had been sent in. Their heads were together at the top of the table, and as they went from one point to another their satisfaction was seen to grow.

'Tell us about it,' Pilling called out from the bottom of the table.

Bertram rose to his feet. He never lost any opportunity of making a speech, and evidently saw his opportunity to make one now, for he cleared his throat and took up the attitude of an orator. 'Gentlemen,' he began, 'I am very pleased to be able to tell you that, as far as we can judge at present, every one of our solutions has turned out to be right.'

(*Continued on page* 342.)

THE WATCH-BOY.

HAVE you ever heard of a 'watch-boy'? On the shores of many a Norwegian fjord he is to be seen, sitting in his wooden sentry-box, which is raised on stilts. His duty is to keep his keen young eyes fixed on the waters of the fjord: to watch for and make known the approach of fish. The farmers, at work in the fields, rely upon him to let them know when the right moment arrives for them to leave their land-harvesting and gather in the harvest of the sea. As soon as the boy gives the signal they cease working, fling their big nets across their shoulders, and hasten to the boats. So you see that the watch-boy is a very useful and important person.

GOOD SWIMMERS.

IS it not strange that men have to *learn* the art of swimming, whereas nearly all animals take to the water naturally, and need no teacher to tell them what to do when they are in it?

The squirrel is one of the swiftest animal swimmers. Once upon a time, a man who had a young squirrel which had never seen water wished to find out if it could swim. So he took it with him in a rowing-boat to the middle of a lake, and then put it into the water. The little creature at once turned towards the bank, with head and paws above the water, back and tail beneath it. It swam so quickly that the man was scarcely able to get hold of his 'water baby' again when it came to the shallow water near the shore.

The bear is an excellent swimmer, though he has often to swim in very cold water, which is considered bad for a swimmer. Some bears can swim thirty miles, or even more, without any painful effort.

If a swimming competition were thrown open to animals, the first prize would be won by the Polar bear, for, of all swimmers in the world, he, though not the swiftest, is the best. He spends half his time in the water, swimming and diving, and, as we know, 'practice makes perfect.'

E. DYKE.

EYES THAT SEE:

THINGS WE OFTEN OVERLOOK.

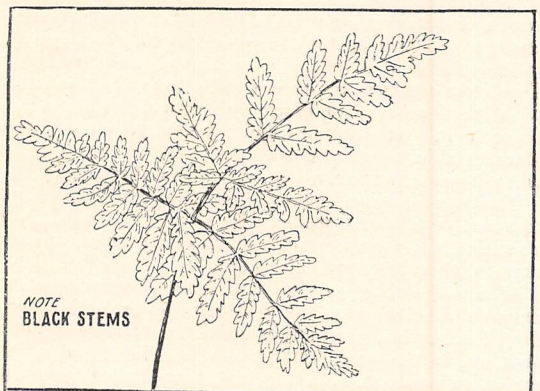
X.—IN THE MOUNTAINS.

THIS glorious afternoon in September I am sitting to write among the rocks on one of the higher mountains in Wales. I and my companion have trudged many a mile this morning to reach this spot, and after a very welcome lunch, and a rest, I am writing this to tell you what I see of interest around me, and what I saw on my way here.

The wind is very high, and, though the day is brilliantly sunny and warm, we are glad to shelter among the rocks. As I write I hear it rushing up the gullies and whistling among rocks only just round the corner from here; yet we are basking in the sun in a peaceful nook. Just a few feet above us is the cairn which marks the summit; this is a pile of chunks of rocks of small size, placed there by the Government surveyors when they came here to map out the district. There are no paths on this mountain, because no one comes here except people on walking tours, or shepherds looking after their sheep. When we started we just made up our minds to which peak we would come, and walked practically straight ahead till we got here. I say there are no paths, but that is hardly true, for there are hundreds of sheep-tracks, tiny little paths only a few inches wide, but quite nice to walk on at times. You know how sheep wander about, following each other in an apparently aimless manner, till their little feet in time make these tracks.

One other path we did come across, leading to a disused slate quarry on the side of this mountain; evidently it was used at one time by the miners on their way to work. The path itself was gone, but the cairns which originally marked it were still there. These cairns are only composed of five or six small pieces of rock just carelessly piled up at various spots. It seems odd that

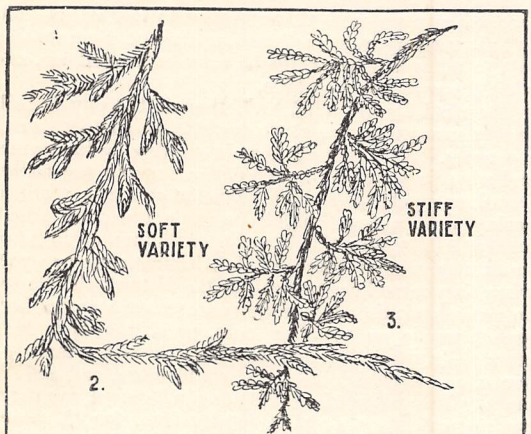
on ground where there is little else but chips and chunks of rock everywhere a cairn would be noticeable, but it is a fact that as soon as man puts together, however roughly, a pile of a few stones, you at once recognise that it is a sign, and a person used, as I am, to the mountains knows that it marks a route. When rock-climbing on difficult routes, one meets these cairns at



1. OAK FERN (*POLYPODIUM*)

every doubtful spot, placed there by the one who originally first climbed by that particular route.

In this little shelter in which we are resting there is a deep crack in the rock, and deep down inside I can see lovely green ferns looking cool and fresh. There is the delicate Oak Fern, my favourite (fig. 1). Its fronds are very slender and graceful, being carried on black

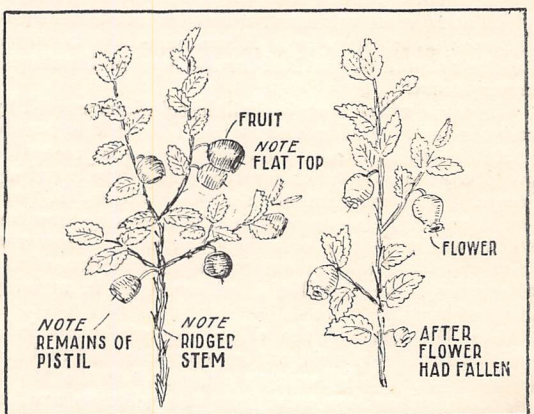


2 & 3. TWO FORMS OF CLUB MOSS

stems like Maidenhair. There is also a tuft of Parsley Fern, a much-cut form of frond like parsley, and very brittle to gather. I have happened to see this little group tucked away in this crack; no doubt there are hundreds of other similar groups on this mountain that no one will ever see. Does it not seem wonderful that God should place such beautiful things where, the chances are, no one will ever see them!

As we came along I gathered various specimens of plants which are peculiar to these higher positions. Here are two mosses which always interest me (figs. 2 and 3)—two forms of Club Moss. The first is my particular favourite, the Stag-horn Moss; it is soft and silky to the touch, and its trails sometimes eighteen inches to two feet in length. These long trails always remind me of green chenille, that silky stuff people used to put round the bases of glass cases when they covered ornaments with those awful globes! The other form of Club Moss is stiffer, and arranges its branches in tufts; it is very pretty, but a little less graceful.

There are two forms of berry which grow here—the Bilberry and the Crowberry. Of Bilberry there are huge masses everywhere (fig. 4). It rarely grows more than about eight or ten inches high, and its black berries, covered with a grey bloom (like black grapes), are very acceptable as a substitute for a drink! The flavour is peculiar, but good. They are queer little things, about the size of currants, but having little flat tops with the remains of the pistils left as tiny points. I found a piece in bloom; one generally can at nearly



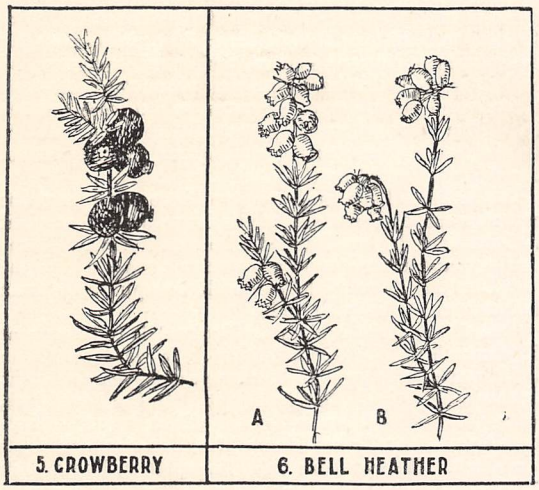
4. BILBERRY IN FRUIT & FLOWER

any time of the year. I show it to you in my figure: you see it is a drooping, bell-shaped flower; it is waxy, and of a pale pink colour. The other berry is the Crowberry (fig. 5). This grows in big spreading patches; its berries are round and black, about the size of small currants; they are much appreciated by the moor-fowl. The general appearance of the plant is somewhat like heather, for its leaves are very numerous and look narrow, but the edges are very curiously curved back, so that they nearly meet at the back of the leaf; this, of course, gives them a spiky appearance. The sprays are very pretty at all times, the plant being an evergreen, and the stems have a reddishness which adds to the beauty of the sprays.

Of Heather and Ling there is plenty about these mountains. By the way, there is always a doubt in people's minds as to which of these two is which! Now, fig. 6, A, is a piece of Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), the most common variety about here. Its bells are of a red purple, and fade to blue and later to ash-colour, which, no doubt, gives it the Latin name '*cinerea*,' which means ash-coloured. At B I show the Cross-leaved Heather (*Erica tetralix*). One does not find so much of this, but it occurs in damp spots, and is very graceful. Its

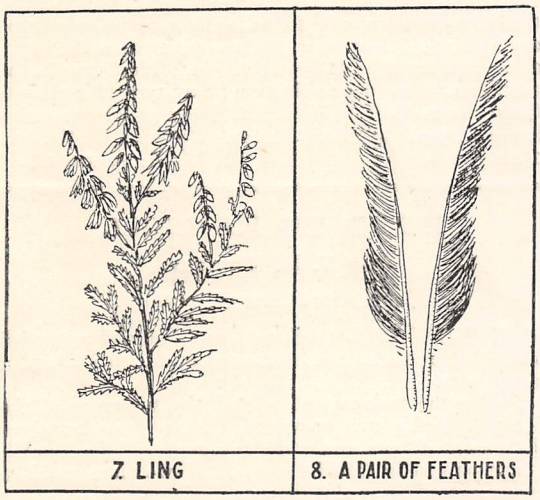
flowers are pale pink, and, as you see, they occur in a group at the top of the stem, which droops. The leaves are arranged in groups of four, forming a cross, thus giving the name, cross-leaved. The 'white heather' sold in the streets is generally Ling, you will find. It is as shown in fig. 7.

A little while ago my companion picked up a long black feather, evidently from the wing of a rook. A



5. CROWBERRY | 6. BELL HEATHER

minute or two later he found another, and he surprised me by saying, 'Fancy! Here is the *other!*' I did not at first grasp his meaning when he said he had found the 'other,' but I soon remembered it was a bit of bird-lore, and was very interesting. It is this, that when a



7. LING | 8. A PAIR OF FEATHERS

bird sheds a large wing feather, he quickly pulls out the corresponding feather from the other wing, so that its wings are again equal and he can fly quite straight. 'But,' you may ask, 'how do you know that you have a pair of feathers?' Well, here in fig. 8 is a pair of feathers, and you will at once see that they each curve in an opposite direction. Now at any time you find a large feather, you look to see if you can find the other.

The sun is beginning to set over the sea, so we must make our way home. From our nook here we look down on miles and miles of open moorland, dotted with sheep. Here and there are small farms surrounded by a few stunted trees for shelter. These trees are stunted because of the rough times they have in these parts in the winter, storms such as folk who live only in towns can hardly understand. Away further in the distance is a winding river and acres and acres of odd-shaped fields, reminding me of crazy patchwork. Still further away, the sea and the islands of Anglesea and Puffin. It is hard to tear oneself away from so much peaceful beauty, but home must be reached before dark, for it is easy to lose oneself here, and we do not want a night in the open.

E. M. Barlow.

THE ADVENTURES OF TOMMY.

WHETHER his name really *was* Tommy I do not know, but we must call him something, and I was not told the boy's name. At any rate, he tried to be a 'Tommy,' and actually was one for a short time.

Well, Tommy—as I will call him—wished very much to be a soldier, and to take part in the Great War, but he was under age—only fourteen and a half. So he did the wrong thing, which so many of our lads have done: he told a lie, and said that he was older. As he was a fine, tall young fellow for his age, he was believed. He became a soldier, and after some training was sent off to Salonika. But his poor mother was grieving about her lost boy. When she found out that he had enlisted, she wrote a letter to the authorities, telling them the correct age of her son, and begging that he might be sent home to her.

So Master Tommy was shipped off for home, but it is a marvel that he ever got there! He had an eventful voyage. The ship in which he travelled distinguished herself by ramming four German submarines and netting two others, and then she herself was torpedoed. Tommy, finding himself in the sea, seized a floating barrel, and clung to it with all his might. The weather was bitterly cold, but, strange to say, the cold kept Tommy alive. He became exhausted, and could no longer consciously hold on to the barrel; but *his arms had frozen to it,* and in this strange manner he was supported until a boat picked him up—barrel and all! To thaw the frozen limbs and free them from the barrel was hard work, and must have caused much pain to Tommy.

What a lot he would have to tell his mother when he got home!

E. D.

HOT CROSS BUNS.

ALL of you have eaten hot cross buns, I am sure; I am almost as sure that none of you have either seenn or tasted a hot cross bun that was aged a whole year old! But do you know that in some of the remote English villages you may find dreadfully stale buns in the farmhouses, strung from the beams of the kitchen ceilings!

There they hang all the year round—one in each house; the country people there consider it unlucky

to take them down until the time has come round again to hang up a new hot cross bun.

Stranger still, if the cattle on the farm be taken ill, a wonderful remedy for them is supposed to be—what do you think?—why, a little of the wonderful bun, grated into powder, and then mixed with water into a drink!

ETHEL TALBOT.

THE DUNCE'S CAP.

WHEN, laden with my bag of books,
I take my way to school,
I wish the fishes would not leap
Within the shady pool!
The jay screams in the leafy woods,
The thrush sings by the gate;
They seem to say, 'Come, look at us!'
And then, of course, I'm late.

I try to say my tables o'er
As I run down the lane;
The blackbird scolds me as I pass,
And then I pause again.
I want to find his mossy nest
Perched high in bush or tree;
How can I think of fraction sums,
Or stupid rule-of-three?

And when I cross the common, where
The golden sunbeams stray,
I have to wait a little while
To see the rabbits play;
I chase them—oh! it's fun to see
Them scurry here and there!
But when at last I reach the school,
The Dunce's Cap I wear!

MAUD E. SARGENT.

CEDARS.

THE cedar is a cone-bearing tree, and a near relative of the Scotch fir, the larch, the pine, and the cypress. The cedar of Lebanon, which is the true cedar, is a fairly large tree, which throws its branches out horizontally. The needle-shaped leaves have also a flat arrangement, while the cones rise up erect above them. The wood of the cedar is durable; but being filled with resin, and cross-grained, it is not of much value for furniture or house fittings. The cedar wood which is used for lead pencils is the Bermuda or Virginia cedar, which is really a juniper; and a somewhat similar tree supplies the wood for many of the cigar boxes.

The author of *The Land and the Book*, a book which deals with missionary life and work in Palestine, tells us that there were very few cedars left upon Lebanon when he visited the mountain, fifty or sixty years ago. He counted four hundred and forty-three trees of all sizes, and he says that there were more cedars of Lebanon within fifty miles of London than there were on Lebanon itself. These English trees had all been grown from nuts or seed which had originally been obtained from Palestine; and the missionary says that he had gathered hundreds of cones, and sent them to his friends in Europe and America.

It is interesting to study the history of some of the oldest cedar-trees which are growing in our English parks and gardens. It is sometimes said that the cedar was first introduced into England by John Evelyn, who was born in 1620 and died in 1706. He travelled through many countries of Europe when he was a young man, and he was interested in trees, and wrote a book about them; but there does not appear to be any real evidence that he planted the first cedar cones. The oldest cedar-trees in England certainly seem to date from the early years of Evelyn's life, whether he planted them or not. Shortly before 1640 the fourth Earl of Pembroke, the third Earl of Devonshire, and some other distinguished persons sent a couple of explorers and collectors to Palestine. These men brought back with them some cedars, or cedar cones, which were planted in Wilton Park, where they are still to be seen. A few years ago our present King and Queen planted some of the cones produced by these trees.

At Methley Park in Yorkshire there are many fine cedars, some of them old, which have been planted at various times by the Savilles, who own the park. Some of the younger trees were grown from cones which the late Lord Mexborough had himself brought back from Lebanon about the year 1840.

One of the finest cedars in England is to be seen at Titchmarsh in Northamptonshire. It was planted in 1627, and was thought to be then twenty years old. It is now nearly eighty feet in height. In Oatlands Park, near Weybridge, there is a cedar which is said to have been planted by Prince Henry, the third son of Charles the First. He was born in 1640, and left England in 1652. A cedar at Rufford Abbey in Nottingham was planted by Charles the Second about the year 1675, and it was regarded at that time as a great novelty in England. There is a large cedar at Welburn Hall in Yorkshire which has a trunk nearly fifteen feet in circumference. Its branches extend in a circle which is sixty or seventy feet in diameter. The tree is old, but the date when it was planted is not recorded. Among the cedar-trees growing near London may be named the one at Enfield House, which was planted in 1683 by a celebrated botanist, Robert Uvedale. Wordsworth, the poet, planted a cedar at Brinsop Court, now a farmhouse, five or six miles from Hereford. There are also interesting cedars at Lambeth Palace, Warwick Castle, and other places.

W. A. ATKINSON.

HELD TO RANSOM.

BY V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 322.)

AFTERWARDS Achmet descended and proceeded to harness his own horse and that of his wounded companion.

Before the task was completed, the summons of the Moorish leader was answered. From two directions little knots of men came riding; soon five of the Moorish horsemen had answered the call, and two more could be seen approaching in the distance.

One of these men Achmet sent back to the camp of Mulai Hafid with his wounded companion laid across the saddle of a led horse. The rest of the little band set out on that search which was now doubled in its objects.

It would be wearisome to describe that search too minutely. Two days passed, days filled with such a

succession of disappointments that they seemed to Sandy to stretch out to endless weeks, during which they had been riding—riding—riding.

They all kept together now, not riding separately, for fear of a surprise attack either from Abdul's soldiers, or from those who had seized Harland and Dick, to whatever party they belonged. But no faintest trace could they find of the passage of a consi lerable body of men through the country over which they passed.

Gradually Achmet became more and more convinced that the capture had been effected by hill tribesmen, who had then hastened back to their fastnesses; accordingly on the third day of the search they struck sideways towards the foothills of the mountains, riding over rocky and uneven ground, most difficult to search thoroughly.

Sandy was fast becoming hopeless. He was too miserable to eat or sleep, and his eyes looked bigger than ever in his pale, thin face. He was so very tired—and it seemed so utterly impossible that anything should be discovered in this wild region of rocks and sand.

It was in this dreary mood that the boy wandered away from the camp at sunset. One great desire possessed him, but a desire of which he was bitterly and desperately ashamed, although he felt that he would give almost anything to yield to it. He must go somewhere where it did not matter if he cried—where he could not be watched by the grave, cold eyes of the Moorish soldiers. For although Achmet was kind in his serious way, Sandy felt that he did not really understand—that he did not know how utterly lonely the boy felt . . .

And so he slipped away alone, amongst the red rocks which glowed in the sunset light. He eluded Achmet's vigilance, literally running once he was out of sight, until he reached a little ledge or plateau, surrounded on three sides by rocky walls, about half a mile from the camp.

Here Sandy flung himself down, face downwards, with his forehead resting on his arms. Here he was quite hidden; here he could cry his heart out if he liked, and no one would ever know.

But now, strangely enough, he seemed to have no desire for tears. He felt too utterly tired to do more than lie still in a kind of stupor, wondering vaguely if he would ever find enough energy to go back to the camp.

A sound roused him. At first, he only thought of it as part of a kind of dream. Then of a sudden he knew that it was real.

'I do wonder what has become of Sandy.' Those were the words he heard. 'I feel so frightfully bothered about him, Father.'

It was Dick's voice—Dick's, without the faintest shadow of a doubt. And he was speaking somewhere out of sight, but quite close at hand, on the other side of the rocks, against which Sandy pressed himself, starting to his feet and listening intently.

'We shall have to be patient, my lad—and hope for the best.' It was Captain Harland's voice that answered, and Sandy choked back a cry with difficulty. So Achmet had been right: they were both there. The same band had evidently captured them.

Sandy's first instinct was to scramble at once round or over the rampart of rock, which separated him from his father and brother, and show himself: his second thought, as is proverbially the case, was wiser.

There would almost certainly be a strong guard set over the prisoners, and to be captured himself would be fatal, since it was more than probable that Achmet and his men might not discover the hiding-place which he himself had found by mere chance. No, he must first take the news to the Moors, and bring them to the rescue.

Sandy set off at full speed, scrambling down over the rocky path by which he had come, all his weariness gone as though by magic. In a short time he reached a spur of the cliff which overhung their camping-ground, and was within easy hearing from it, although to reach the lower level it was necessary to go round a considerable distance.

Not far below him Sandy could see Achmet, sitting calm and dignified, awaiting the hour of the evening prayer. The other Moors were busied with the horses, and with preparations for the evening meal.

'Achmet!' Sandy called, leaning down from the ledge. 'Achmet . . . listen!'

The Moor rose slowly and with dignity, raising his hand in salutation.

'Achmet . . . I've found them—my father and Dick!' Sandy's voice was hoarse with excitement. 'I heard them talking just now—they're in a cave or something, but I don't know how many, or who are with them . . . Oh, don't wait—come up at once, all of you!'

To do the Moor justice, he did not hesitate or linger, once he had grasped the purport of Sandy's words. He spoke a few curt sentences to his companions, and immediately they left their occupations, and followed him towards the path by which Sandy himself had ascended half-an-hour before. Yet to the boy's feverish excitement, the movements of Achmet and his men were quite intolerably leisurely.

He himself was away, and scrambling over the rocks again before they had so much as started. He reached the little plateau, glanced back to discover that the Moors were following, and cast about for a way of crossing the rock wall to reach the place where his father and brother appeared to be imprisoned.

He spied a rough goat-track and hastened along it; he could at least discover if it led in the right direction, and that would save time when the others arrived.

In his excitement Sandy forgot to be cautious; the sound of those well-known voices, which he now caught once more, urged him on. He felt that at any risk he must reach his father and Dick. He scrambled round a projecting spur of rock, and came upon those whom he sought with quite unexpected suddenness.

And there were no soldiers or tribesmen; no guards of any sort or description to be seen. Captain Harland and Dick were quite alone, seated in a shallow cave, the entrance to which could only be reached by the rough path along which Sandy had come.

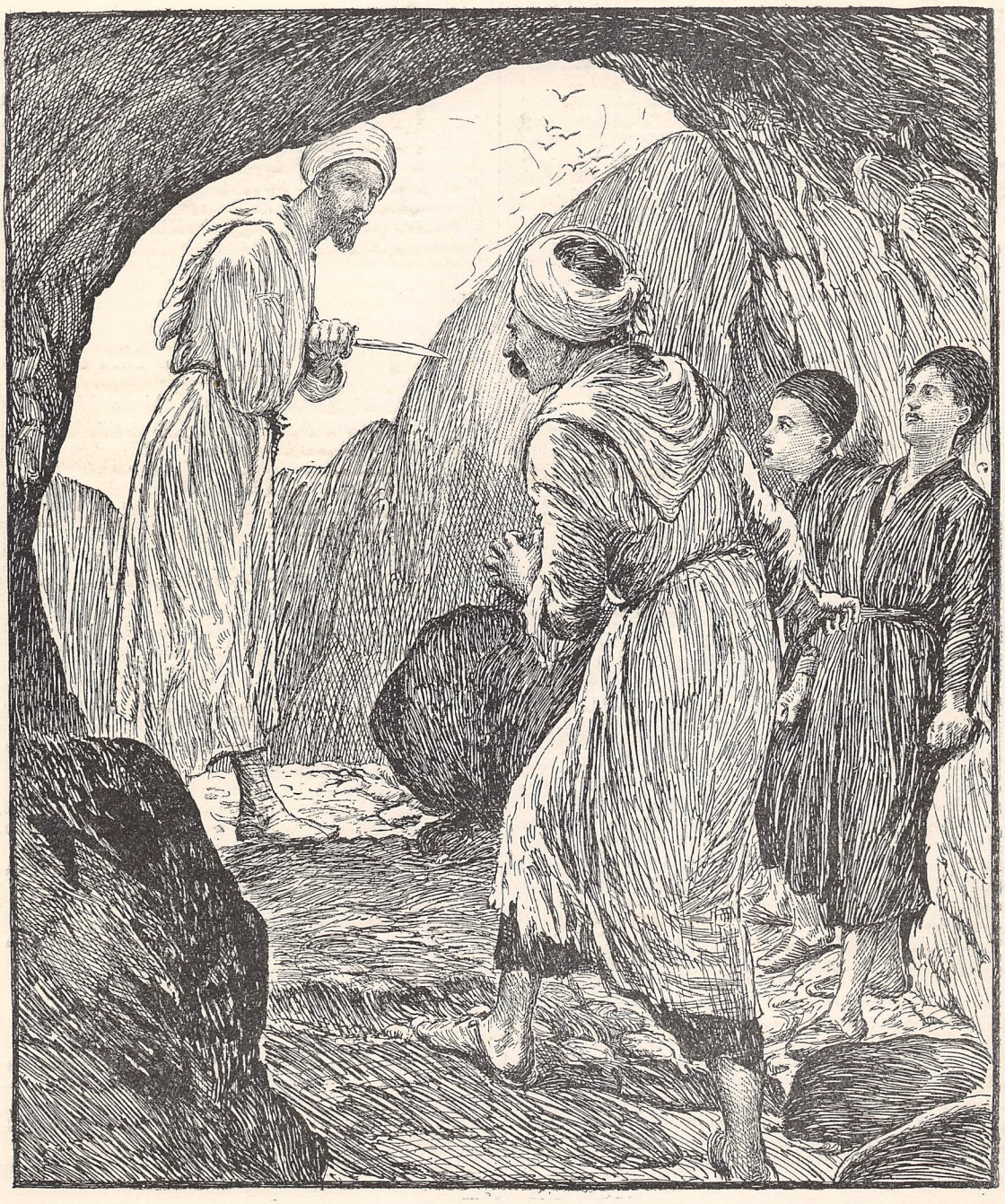
In his immense relief the boy forgot any possible need for further caution; he ran forward with a positive shout of joy: 'Father—Dick! Oh, I've really found you!'

Dick, starting to his feet, responded with the same joyous excitement, but Captain Harland's face was white and anxious, as he too rose. 'Are you alone?' he demanded swiftly, without pause for greeting. 'How did you get here?'

Sandy answered without hesitation: 'No, I'm not alone. Achmet and a lot of his men are with me—oh, we've been looking for you everywhere.'

(*Continued on page* 338.)

"Father! Dick! Oh, I've really found you!'"



"The two men faced each other."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 335.)

A HOARSE exclamation broke from Captain Harland, and he glanced around him like an animal which suddenly finds itself trapped. Dick's expression showed scarcely less consternation, as he burst out into hurried, excited questions: 'Sandy, surely you don't mean . . . they don't know that we're here—Achmet and the others?'

'Of course they do. I heard you talking, and went back to tell them. They're following me, and they'll be here in a minute.'

Sandy answered frankly, bewildered by the dismay and consternation which his words seemed to carry. It was Dick who broke out into explanation: 'Oh, good heavens, Sandy . . . you don't know what frightful harm you've done . . . of course, you don't understand, but, oh, why on earth couldn't you have spoken to us first alone! Listen . . . we've been trying to escape from Achmet all this time. He's not father's friend, as you and I believed—he betrayed him—he's determined to get him killed—he will do anything to harm him—he's an utter traitor altogether . . . oh, I can't explain it all now! There isn't time!'

'Achmet! A traitor!' Sandy gasped incredulously. 'But he seemed so tremendously fond of Father!'

'Seemed, yes—I dare say!' It was Captain Harland himself who spoke with hoarse bitterness. 'That was just because he wanted to give you confidence in him. Yes, I swear to you, Sandy, that if he catches me it means . . . death.'

Sandy shivered—stood staring with wide frightened eyes. From outside came the sound of voices and footsteps. 'They're coming . . . !' he whispered.

'Coming . . .' Captain Harland repeated, and again glanced round, as though seeking for some way of escape.

'Yes, there's no time to get away . . .' Suddenly Sandy broke down, and cried out piteously: 'Oh, Father, I didn't know . . . I didn't know!'

'Be quiet, can't you!' Captain Harland's face was very white and strained. 'Haven't you done harm enough already? Look here! Go out and meet them—tell them there's no one here—that you've made a mistake . . . anything! It's the only possible chance of getting them away.'

Trembling in every limb, Sandy obeyed. The whole thing was unreal to him—a ghastly nightmare. It seemed incredible that Achmet should be a traitor—Achmet, who had seemed so kind and honest, so worthy of trust. And yet . . . it was his father and Dick who said it.

The boy stumbled round the projecting rock, so blindly that he almost ran into the arms of Achmet.

'Where are they?' the Moor demanded, and there was a note of unwonted eagerness in his voice. 'You said that the Sidi, your father, was found—where is he?'

'No, it wasn't . . . I mean . . . he wasn't . . . there's not anybody . . . I made altogether a mistake . . .' Sandy blundered on desperately, but the Moor's keen, subtle eyes were fixed upon his flushed, miserable face, reading there the truth which his lips did not speak.

'The voices that you heard—you have not found those who spoke?' he questioned quietly.

'No . . . there isn't . . . there wasn't anybody . . . it was all a mistake . . .'

'But, perhaps, although you have failed, we may be able to find them . . . do not fear, but let me pass.'

As he spoke, Achmet's hands were on Sandy's shoulders; he put the boy aside quietly but firmly, and pressed on, followed by his companions.

Sandy, desperate at the failure of his errand, tried to spring between, to block Achmet's path, but the Moor had stridden round the rock which shielded the cave before he could reach his side. Sandy heard a fierce exclamation; then the Moor's voice, calm, and with a touch of almost mirthful scorn.

'So—you had best not attack me, Roumi! I am one-armed, true, but you—are unarmed! I have my knife you see; it will be wiser not to attack me.'

Sandy reached the terrace before the cave-opening. He saw Achmet standing tall and erect, the long-bladed knife held against his chest and pointing outwards. He saw his father, half crouching, as though about to spring upon the Moor, but with a look of fierce and baffled anger upon his face.

Dick leant against the rock-face, white and frightened, and Sandy, feeling utterly forlorn, ran across to his side. The two men faced each other, paying no heed to the presence of the boys or the other Moors.

'So I see you again, Nazarani,' the Moor said slowly, and the lip curled in scorn under his black moustache. 'You are playing your old game, it seems.'

'What do you want with me, Achmet?' Captain Harland spoke defiantly, standing upright now and flinging back his head.

'To put an end to your plans,' Achmet said slowly.

'And by what right do you interfere with me?' the Englishman began, but the Moor interrupted him.

'The right of one who knows you,' he said.

'Dick—Sandy!' suddenly Captain Harland turned upon the boys. 'Don't believe anything that this fellow says.'

'Of course we don't,' Dick answered stoutly. 'I've heard all about you, Achmet—I know that you only just pretended to be our friend—I know that you betrayed our father. He's told me everything himself.'

'He has not,' the Moor said slowly and deliberately.

'What do you mean?' Dick was taken aback.

'Your *father* has told you—nothing. For this man is not the Sidi Harland.'

(*Continued on page* 351.)

THE DELFT JUG.

A Story of Evacuation Day.

PART I.

LITTLE Katinka Westenfeldt, with her sweet rosy cheeks and flaxen braids, her red bodice and blue-quilted petticoat, her white hose and stout buckled shoes, made a pretty picture as she stood by the hearth-side in the kitchen of an old Dutch farmhouse.

She held a blue-and-white pitcher in her hand, from which she poured a plentiful supply of milk into a tempting-smelling mixture that bubbled merrily in the iron pot over the blazing logs.

It was November, just one hundred and thirty years ago. The sun was setting in a blaze of glory, lighting up the gilt weather-cocks on the gables of the house-

roof and the shining copper and brass pots and pans ranged round the walls of the dear old kitchen.

But Katinka was not thinking of the beautiful sunset or the cold wind that was arising and howling in the wide chimney. 'Ach,' she muttered to the green-eyed cat who warmed his nose in the firelight; 'what a fine day to-morrow will be for New York! How proud I will be when in my best clothes I go to see the gay doings in the town, for to-morrow——'

But, alas! what more she would have said was interrupted by a large stone which came rattling and bumping down the chimney and the sound of a voice shouting, 'Hist! hist! Katinka, ho! ho! The British depart to-morrow, you know!'

This commotion was so sudden and so startling that Katinka, in her fright, let the Delft pitcher fall upon the red bricks, where it shattered into a hundred pieces. 'What shall I do? Oh! oh!' she cried, and wrung her hands in terrible trouble. 'The blue Holland jug! The jug that my aunt prizes above anything else! Oh, what will she say? But it is that wicked, bad Jan who is to blame. It is all his fault!'

Katinka ran out into the garden, gazing anxiously up to the red gables and gilded vanes of the sloping roof, which her sailor cousin Jan could climb like a cat. But if the rascal was upon the roof he was artful enough to remain hidden behind the chimney-stacks. Katinka's blue eyes filled with tears. It was too bad of Jan to play such mischief. And, oh, wouldn't there be trouble for her!

Just then the gate at the end of the box-bordered path clicked open, and a buxom dame in a long quilted and wadded cloak and hood entered the garden. It was good Anna van Arsdale returning from her marketing. One glance at her steely-grey eyes and close-shut lips told you that she was a woman to be obeyed and respected.

Katinka's colour came and went. She dashed the tear-drops from her cheeks and went to meet her aunt bravely. But her voice shook pitifully as she said, 'Please, Aunt Anna, I have broken the Delft jug. But it was an accident, and I am very sorry.'

'The Delft jug broken! The very jug my mother brought from the dear homeland! Thou art truly the worst of girls, Katinka.' Aunt Anna's face looked more stern as she continued: 'Tell me how it happened.'

'I was startled by a noise on the roof,' Katinka stammered, choking down her tears, determined at all costs not to betray her cousin, of whom she was very fond in spite of his impish tricks. 'It fell, and broke in pieces on the floor. Oh, Aunt, I will spin enough flax to buy thee another very soon.'

'That is but just, Katinka. But, listen: until a new jug is bought never a step do you stir beyond the garden-gate, save on Sundays to church. Careless girls may not go a-gadding, that I very well do know.'

'But, Aunt, remember to-morrow,' pleaded the child; 'think of the great day when the British leave Manhattan Island! Oh, I did so want to see our troops, and I did want to see the fireworks!'

'To-morrow is not for women and girls; it is for men and boys. Nay, thou must stay in the house and spin; it will teach thee to control thy careless fingers. When the Delft jug is replaced thou mayest go out, but until then thou must remain here.'

Katinka turned away to hide the sad tears that would come. The Delft jug could never be replaced by the next day, and she must miss the rejoicings in New York.

Anna van Arsdale, as she stooped over the pieces of her precious jug, did not guess the storm of sorrow that swept over her little niece.

Katinka lingered in the garden to finish her bitter weeping. But suddenly she caught sight of a lithe boyish figure among the turrets, weather-vanes, and tiny attic-windows. With a rush and a leap he jumped from the red roof into an old apple-tree, and from its branches he sprang lightly down at the little maid's feet. 'Katinka, Katinka!' he whispered, putting his arm around her. 'Don't cry—it was all my fault!'

'Oh, Jan, how couldst thou be so wicked?' she asked, looking at him sorrowfully. 'I am in sad disgrace now. But I am not a tell-tit, though. Oh, dear, it will take me a long, long time to buy another jug, for I have hardly any money saved!'

'And my pockets are empty, too,' sighed Jan, 'though they were full enough when the *Dolphin* came into port. Look here! I will speak to Mother for you. She will forgive you if I beg her to, because my ship sets sail next week.'

But Aunt Anna was deaf to all Jan's entreaties. It made not the least difference that he acknowledged his guilt. Carelessness was a sin that the careful Dutch-woman could not forgive, especially as her beautiful jug—so highly treasured as her mother's gift—had suffered.

The evening meal was eaten in silence. And that night patriotic little Katinka cried herself to sleep, so disappointed was she that she might not see the Evacuation Day festivities—that day which saw the English troops leave the soil of America for ever, that day on which General Washington was left in quiet possession of her native city.

The eventful 25th of November, 1783, dawned clear and frosty. Very early people flocked into New York from miles around, although the actual departure of the troops was not until the afternoon.

Jan van Arsdale made short work of his breakfast that morning, so eager was he to be up and away with his friend, Kips Goosen. Standing on the Bowling Green, munching cheese-cakes and lollipops, they cheered as the Britishers marched from Harlem to Bowery Lane and from thence to Whitehall, where they were to embark for Staten Island and Long Island to set up their temporary camps.

Past swung the picturesque Highlanders and the giant grenadiers of Anspach and the gorgeous Waldeckers—along they went, their scarlet uniforms and arms flashing and glinting in the sunlight. The sight was enough to make any lad cheer until he was hoarse; but Jan voted it dull compared to the imposing sight they had seen earlier that day, when General Washington and Governor Clinton had made their public entry into the city, escorted by the Westchester Light Horse, followed by Major-General Knox and the officers of the Army, members of the Assembly, and citizens on foot and on horseback.

Often and often during the day, Jan, glancing down, caught sight of the blue-and-orange ribbon—the combined colours of free America and Holland—that Katinka had pinned to his coat before he left home that morning, and the remembrance of her sad little face turned all his pleasure into pain.

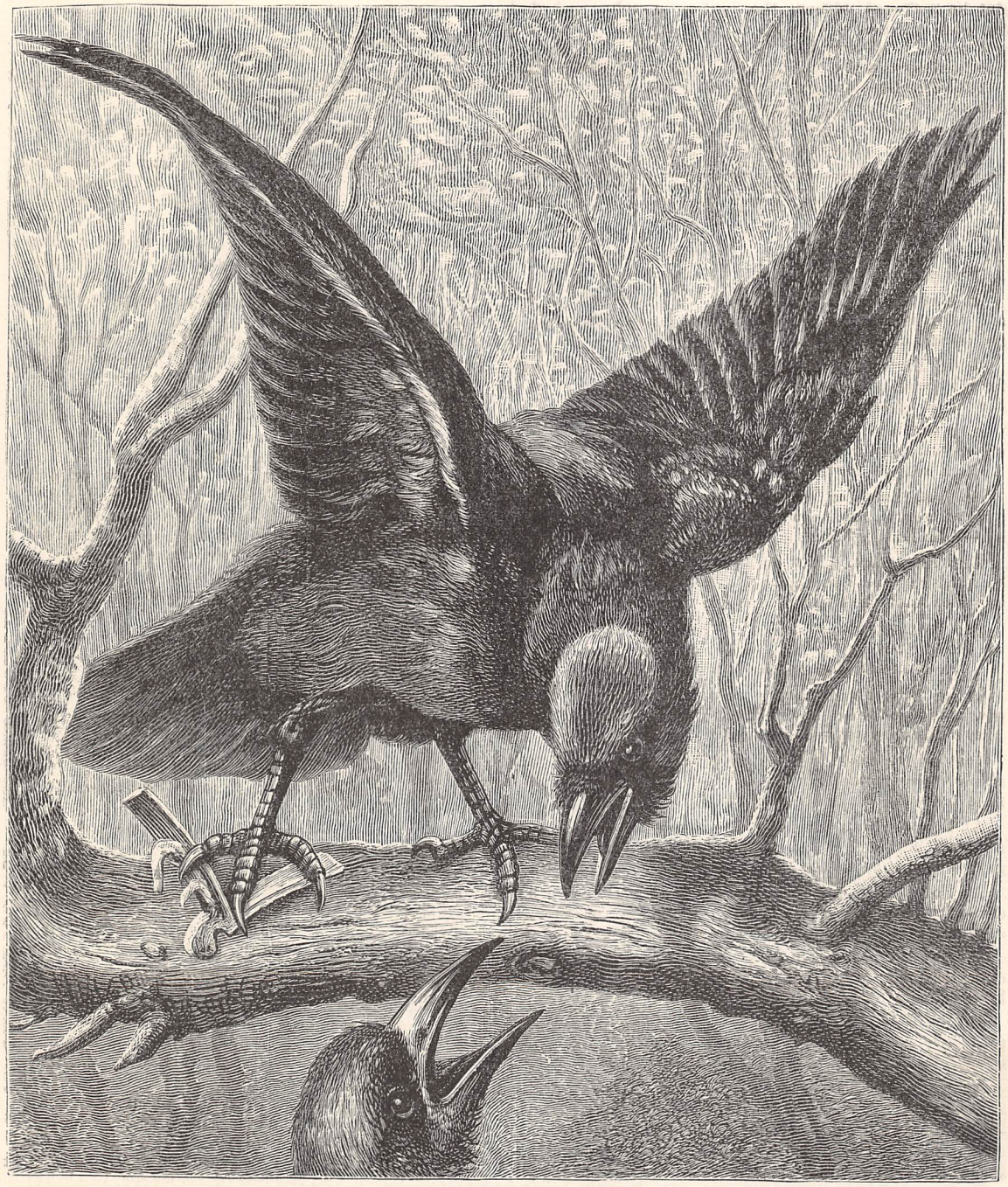
And now, amid the shouts of thousands of voices and

"'What shall I do?'"

the thunder of guns, General Knox was marching by to take formal possession of Fort George.

'Look!' cried Jan, seizing Kip's arm. 'Why don't they pull down the Tory flag? Why does it still float from the fort?' He pointed as he spoke to the royal Red Cross banner of England floating still from the north bastion.

'Surely, the King's men will not return?' queried Kips.



Possession is Nine Points of the Law.

'No, I should think not, indeed!' declared Jan, confidently.

At that moment Jacob van Courtland, a fat little Dutchman, came rolling up. 'Yonder flag can't be hauled down,' said he. 'The English have cut the halyards and slushed the pole with grease for a joke, and all of them are chuckling at our annoyance. 'Tis that rascally Cunningham, they say. This morning he tried to tear down our Stars and Stripes—our "rebel rag," he calls it—from an inn-front in Murray Street.

But he reckoned without the innkeeper, who rushed out with his broom. Ha! ha! And Provost-Marshal was beaten black and blue and his new wig sent adrift like feathers before a blast.'

The three lads laughed heartily at Jacob's story. Then Jan said, 'I'll see if they'll serve us a trick like that, though. We'll be even with them yet!'

(*Concluded on page* 363.)

MARIE AND MAY.

THE English Channel's very wide; French Marie lives upon one side, and on the other—British May; I'll tell you how they spend their day:

At SEVEN, May, with sleepy sighs, stretches herself and yawns and sighs; but little French Marie, you know, got up and dressed an hour ago!

When EIGHT o'clock begins to chime, May's hungry, for it's breakfast-time; but Marie off to school has gone; her 'petit déjeuner' is done.

At NINE, because it is the rule in Scotland, May is off to school; French Marie, with a serious face, has been an hour in her place.

At TEN, though miles stretch in between, both little girls at work are seen; what are they doing? Let *them* say—'La lecture,' Marie; 'Reading,' May!

ELEVEN strikes. May and Marie still work as hard as hard can be; but soon small Marie's 'bonne' will come, to fetch the little French girl home.

For TWELVE brings Marie's 'déjeuner'; though morning school goes on for May; another hour or so must pass, ere Scottish May will leave her class.

When ONE o'clock begins to chime, May knows it's nearly dinner-time; though Marie's 'déjeuner' is done, May's dinner is not yet begun!

Just as it's striking TWO o'clock, Marie goes up to change her frock; May finishes her dinner quick, and runs off with her hockey-stick!

At THREE May's game is nearly through; she's tired and hot, but happy, too. French Marie, feeling very gay, is shopping at the 'Bon Marché'!

At FOUR May's game is at an end; she's walking with a little friend; for French Marie is 'goûter' spread—some fruit, or chocolate, and bread.

It's FIVE! May's ready for her tea; as hungry as a child can be; Marie sits down, with studious looks, beside a pile of lesson-books.

SIX strikes. Down to her work *May* sits; over her tasks her brows she knits; Marie, dressed very fine indeed, goes driving to 'Les Invalides.'

At SEVEN, so very tired May grows, that sleepily upstairs she goes; away across the Channel deep, for Marie, too, it's time to sleep.

You see, in rather different ways do May and Marie spend their days; but if they meet, I think—don't you?—that they will be great friends—these two!

[*Petit déjeuner*—little breakfast (usually coffee and a roll); *la lecture*—reading-lesson: *bonne*—nurse: *déjeuner*—(real) breakfast; *Bon Marché*—(literally, cheap) bazaar or stores; *goûter*—late lunch; *Les Invalides*—home for pensioners, like the English Chelsea Hospital.]

ETHEL TALBOT.

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

BY ARCHIBALD MARSHALL,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 331.)

BERTRAM was interrupted by a spontaneous cheer, and paused, with his hand raised, until the applause had died away. 'As you all know,' he proceeded, 'there have been certain pictures that have given us a great deal of difficulty. We have had solutions offered to us from all quarters, and one of them was given me on the first day of term by a Lower boy, whom I hereby wish to thank in the name of the House.'

He looked towards Jimmy, who was vigorously slapped on the back by his delighted neighbours, while Bertram again held up his hand for silence: 'Well, as I said, we have got all the puzzling ones right, and there has never been a better instance of the whole House working together for the good of the House.'

Great applause here, and some laughter.

'I don't *think*,' said Bertram, lowering his voice impressively, 'that anybody else who has gone in for this competition can have had the advantages we have had in that way. Other fellows in other Houses have gone in for it separately, and they have all worked for their own hand—or, at the best, two or three of them have got together. But we have put *all* our efforts into the common stock, and now, gentlemen, we are about to gain our reward. What has happened at Whyborough will have happened all over England. There will have been very little combined effort, and it is one of the best things I have to look back upon during the happy years I have spent at this school that I have been able to get that combined effort in the House I am proud to be head of. I shall remember it with pleasure all my life, gentlemen.'

More applause, and cries of 'Good old Bertram!'

'One word more, and I've finished,' said Bertram, in his best oratorical style. 'Don't hope *too* much until we get next week's paper. We *must* share the first prize—that's certain, as we have got all the solutions right. The only thing there is any doubt about is as to whether we shall be the only ones. In the first case we should probably get a considerable sum of money, which we should spend in something substantial for the good of the House; in the second, we shall get a very large sum of money, as you see by the numbers of entries there have been, and that sum, however large it is, we shall also spend for the good of the House. Gentlemen, I thank you all heartily for the loyal way in which you have one and all helped in this—er—this—er—great enterprise.'

He sat down amidst applause that must have been very gratifying to him, and the House turned eagerly to its hitherto neglected breakfast. But as he sat down, Williams, who had been looking through the solutions carefully during the progress of his speech, handed him the paper, his finger pointing to something in it. Bertram's satisfied expression changed, and a look of incredulity and dismay took its place.

Everybody looked at him, and Pilling called out again, 'What is it? What's the matter?'

Bertram rose to his feet again, the paper in his hand.

'I'm sorry to have to tell you,' he said, with a deep frown on his face, 'that this whole thing seems to be a beastly swindle. Will those of you who have copies of the paper kindly turn to picture thirty-four?'

This was done. It was a picture of the interior of a church, in which a verger was seen showing a lady into a seat. Beneath it was the picture of a flat expanse of country, with some rough vegetation in the foreground. On the right was the picture of a crowded street, with a policeman in the foreground holding up his hand. In none of the three pictures was any stress laid on the figures. They jumped to the eye as representing a church, a flat bit of country, and a street.

'Fenchurch Street!' called out several voices at once.

'I don't suppose there is anybody who hasn't given that as an answer, said Bertram, with increasing indignation. 'And we were *meant* to give that as an answer. But you'll see it's put down as Guestling Halt. Now I call that positive swindling.'

He sat down again abruptly, too much overcome by disappointment to go on. Williams laughed, leaning back in his chair and looking at the paper. 'I call it rather smart of them,' he said. 'We ought to have got at it from the bobby. There are lots of Halts all over the place, and this is the only one they have given. That ought to have made us smell a rat.'

'Nobody could have told that stuff was ling,' said Bertram, 'and ling doesn't grow on a fen either. I call it a swindle.'

'It isn't a fen if you look at it carefully,' said Manning. 'It's more like a moor, though the distance is straight. And the stuff is quite like heather too, if you look at it.'

'The church comes first, too,' said Williams. 'We ought to have tumbled to that. I'm afraid we got had because it came early among a lot of easy ones. Well, we shan't get enough to build our squash court, Bertram.'

But Bertram refused to give up hope altogether. He didn't thing that anybody would get the right solution of that particular puzzle, and under the terms of the competition the first prize would go to whoever had sent in most right answers. The House might win something substantial after all.

The House did win something. It won eleven and sevenpence, its due share, with some hundreds of others, of the second prize. Three competitors only had given the right answer to the Guestling Halt picture, and two of these had failed elsewhere.

The eleven and sevenpence was spent in tuck. It might have bought a brass plate commemorating Bertram's name as Head of the House, but there would have been nothing to put the brass plate on to; so he had regretfully to give up his ideas of going down to posterity as Stanhope's benefactor.

CHAPTER XXI.

One Monday morning when term was reaching its end, Jimmy arrived in cloisters just as the bell ceased ringing. He made a dash for the chapel door and had it just closed in his face.

It was the first time he had ever been late for chapel. There was not the same temptation for a boy in Hall and Dormitory to snatch that extra quarter of an hour of leisure which was so delicious that it was worth the risk of a punishment to come later. He had got into the way of punctuality under Mr. Cartwright, and had kept it up under Mr. Ringrose.

He was rather sorry to have broken his record, but made his way to the Lower Fourth room with pleasurable anticipations of the company to be found there. For there were always a certain number of absentees in Lower Fourth. An imposition was by no means certain to follow, and if it was given, the slightest valid excuse would remove the danger. Discipline was better than it had been at first under Mr. Ringrose, but still left a great deal to be desired.

The quarter of an hour passed agreeably enough with talk about the coming steeplechases. That for Lower boys was to take place on the following Saturday afternoon. It was thought that either Weaver or Henderson would win it, but that was probably because Lower Fourth liked to back one of its own. There were older boys with longer legs in forms above who certainly seemed to have a better chance.

The conversation was broken up by the arrival of the rest of the form. They usually came in making a considerable noise, which did not die down upon the entrance of Mr. Ringrose, and only became less insistent when lessons had actually begun.

But this morning they all came in as quiet as mice, most of them with a frightened look on their faces, and instantly went to their desks, where those who had let themselves off learning the whole of their rep, buried themselves in their books.

The explanation of this remarkable change was not long in coming. Mr. Cartwright had been in his usual place in chapel, and Mr. Ringrose had been absent. The old order of things had returned, and trouble was likely to come of it.

There was dead silence in the room for the precious minute that remained for learning at least something of what had been unlearnt before. Mr. Cartwright would instantly discover that the majority of the form had not learnt more than the two lines that they would have had to say to Mr. Ringrose, and the trouble would begin there and then, and continue for most of them throughout the morning.

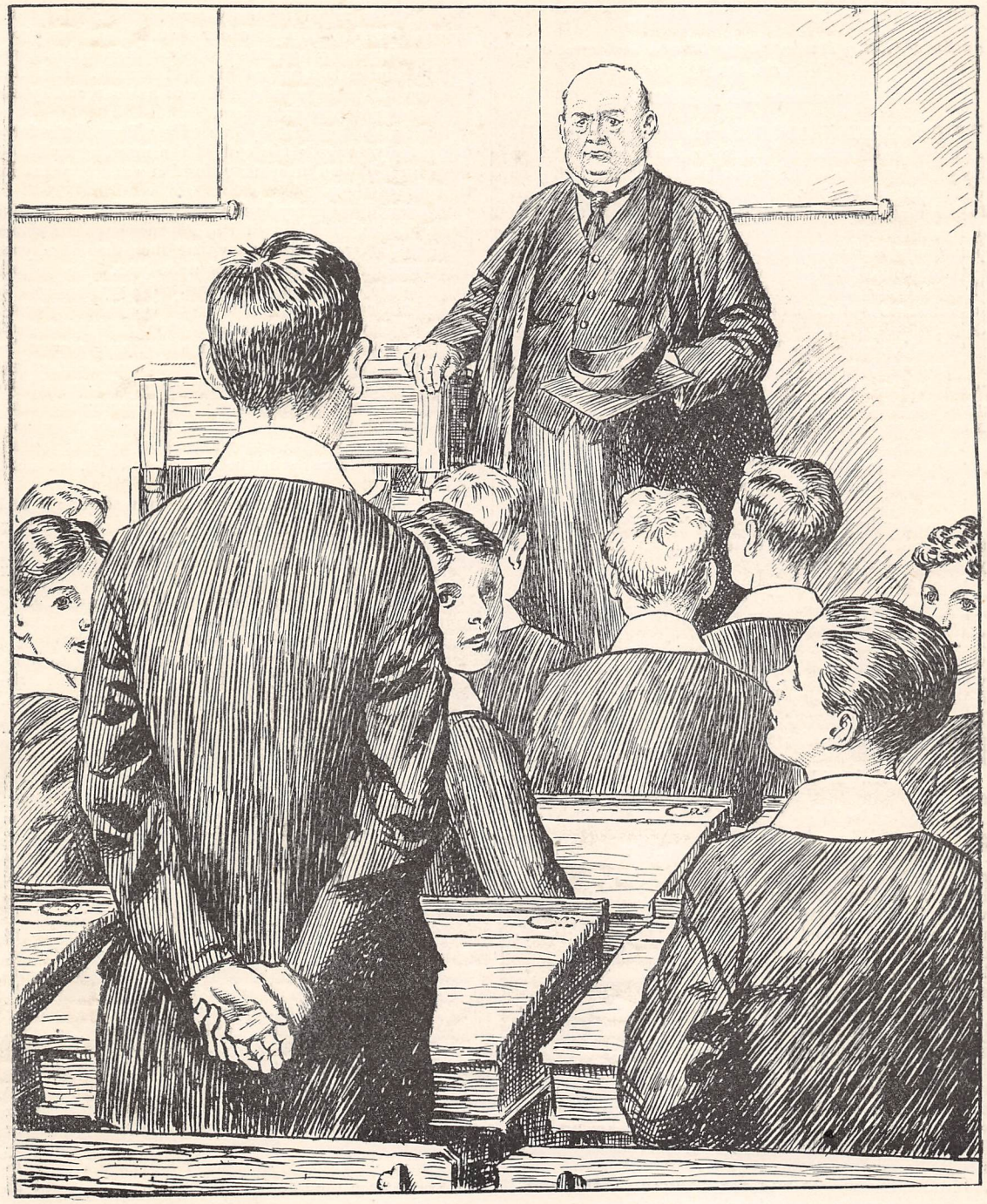
But the first danger was removed. The minutes went on and no master appeared. Those who were quick at learning by heart had time to learn their rep perfectly, and a low buzz of conversation succeeded the silence which those who were still struggling feverishly at their task took great exception to. One would have thought that these boys had never raised their voices while anybody else wanted to be quiet.

Pilling, who sat next to Jimmy at the bottom of the form, was quick enough to learn, and Jimmy had learnt most of his before, and was now perfect in it. 'He's talking to the Head,' said Pilling in an awe-struck whisper. 'By Criminy! There's going to be a row when he comes in. I say, Henshaw, what an ass you were to cut chapel.'

Pilling had cut chapel himself on an average of about three times a fortnight since Mr. Ringrose had taken the form, but was full of virtue over his lucky attendance that morning. With a conscience clear on that account, and his rep perfect, as long as he did not have to keep it in his head too long, his mercurial spirits rose. 'It will be rather a lark,' he said.

(*Continued on page* 346.)

"He made a dash for the chapel door, and had it just closed in his face."



"'I would rather go to the gallows, sir, than be kept in five afternoons running."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 343.)

MR. CARTWRIGHT came stumping in. He looked better and thinner than he had done immediately before his illness; but it was plain that he was in a royal temper. His face was set, his little eyes looked straight in front of him, and, as he mounted the daïs and threw a glance round the form, the most exemplary boys felt uncomfortable.

'Stand up, those boys who were not in chapel,' was the first order, barked out in a voice that struck terror into the hearts of the five culprits who stood up at their desks.

'What's your excuse?' to the first boy.

The first boy was Weaver, whose only real excuse was that he had not wanted to go. He could hardly give that, but knowing that no made excuse could serve him, he stammered out that he had been late.

'How late?'

'About five minutes, sir.'

'Then you meant to stay away?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Two hundred lines; second book of Iliad; stops and accents; double-lined exercise book. Next boy. Did you mean to stay away?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Same punishment. Next boy.'

Nobody ventured any excuse until it came to Jimmy. Mr. Cartwright rapped out his impositions, and evidently wanted to get on to the next business, in which the whole form would be involved. He was out for trouble. There was no doubt whatever about that. He didn't even ask Jimmy if he had been late on purpose; but gave him two hundred lines and opened his Horace.

'Please, sir,' said Jimmy, 'I didn't mean to stay away.'

'Three hundred lines,' snapped Mr. Cartwright, 'and go on first. Which Ode is it?'

The head boy told him promptly. Jimmy, taken aback by the suddenness with which extra punishment had been dealt out to him, stumbled and forgot the lines which he knew perfectly. When he arrived at the middle of the second line Mr. Cartwright said: 'You don't know even the beginning. Learn the ninth ode in the First Book and say it to me this afternoon after school. Go on, Maxwell, at third line.'

The third and fourth lines were the one that Maxwell had reckoned would come to him, and he said them so glibly, having improved his knowledge of them still further during the wait, that they were all he was required to say. Boys were put on sharply here and there all over the form, and the general performance was such that only a few of them got punishments, and those mostly from the same sort of nervousness as had struck Jimmy.

But Mr. Cartwright was not deceived by this comparative perfection. 'You've had time to learn it all since chapel,' he snapped at them. 'We'll see how the rest of the work goes.'

The rest of the work went extremely badly. Even of the blameless few who had worked as well as had been possible under the late disturbances, few escaped the storm, which raged furiously among the rest and demanded more victims at every turn. The lines given amounted to almost as many as Mr. Ringrose had dealt out in the same time on his first arrival. But Mr. Cartwright's lines would all have to be done, and by the people who had received them,

But lines did not satisfy him. He addressed the form collectively towards the end of the morning and told them in his own unsparing fashion exactly what he thought of them.

'I knew directly my back was turned that you would slack. I didn't realise that I had been teaching a whole form of slackers. I won't say that I'm ashamed of you. That wouldn't have any effect upon you. You're lost to all sense of shame yourselves. It's my business to see that a certain amount of work is done here every term. You've done about half of it, taking the good with the bad, while I've been away, and now we're going to make it up. None of you is much better than the rest, and you'll all be treated alike. There will be an hour's extra school for five days, beginning from this afternoon. By the end of the week we shall see how much of the work we have caught up. If it isn't satisfactory, there will be more extra work next week.'

This was appalling, and it was the second time it had happened. The Form thought it was monstrously unfair. The desolating week of extra work taken by the Head Master had had a great effect upon them, and their general behaviour had certainly improved after it. Besides, the Head had made no further complaint, as he would have done if there had been anything particularly wrong.

The full force of the punishment came home to those boys who had been looking forward to putting in the last week's training and practice for the steeplechase. The afternoon before school would be so cut up that there would be no chance of getting on to the Marshes except on the Wednesday half-holiday. All they could do would be to train on the track in the short time that would be left free to them. But to every one it seemed outrageous that the whole Form should be punished in this way, and certainly there were elements of unfairness about it. It was decided, before the time came for the extra hour in the afternoon, that an appeal should be made to Mr. Cartwright, and that if this failed an appeal should be made to the Head Master.

Henderson was chosen to represent the Form. The 'saps' who sat above him all funked, and none of them would have done it satisfactorily. The appeal was to be made after the hour's work, and the way was to be prepared by an attention to duty so exemplary that Mr. Cartwright's heart could hardly help being softened by it.

The work went well enough. Mr. Cartwright was obviously in a less ferocious humour than he had been in the morning. Probably he enjoyed having his afternoon broken into no more than his Form did, and he may still have been feeling the strain of his late illness. At any rate, he gave the signal for release a full five minutes before the hour was up, and had dealt out no impositions during its continuance.

Henderson rose in his seat as Mr. Cartwright was putting on his cap preparatory to departure. 'Please, sir, may I say something for the Form?'

Mr. Cartwright took off his cap again. 'Yes,' he said shortly.

Henderson plunged into it boldly. 'We don't think you've treated us fairly, sir.'

'Why?' There was one thing about Mr. Cartwright that made him respected, although his wrath was feared. If he had any annoyance to express he expressed it directly. He did not use the weapon of sarcasm, which makes masters disliked as well as dreaded by boys.

'You are keeping the whole Form in, sir, but there are a lot of us who have worked just as hard as if you had been here.'

'I'll deal with that later. What else is there?'

There was nothing much else. The punishments given in the morning were no heavier than had been given before when Mr. Cartwright had been dissatisfied with work done. They were only more numerous because more than half the Form had hardly done their work at all. The sole exception was Jimmy's three hundred lines. 'You gave Henshaw three hundred lines, sir, for missing chapel, instead of two.'

'Henshaw tried to make an excuse, which was no excuse.'

'You had asked everybody else, sir, if they had *meant* to be late.'

Mr. Cartwright turned to Jimmy. 'How late were you?' he asked.

'I got there just as the door was being shut, sir,' said Jimmy.

'How often have you been late this term?'

'This morning was the first time, sir.'

'Very well. Two hundred lines instead of three. Weaver!'

Weaver sprang up promptly at the call. 'You seem to have been the ringleader in all the disgraceful insubordination that has gone on.'

'Yes, sir,' said Weaver promptly.

'I didn't get that from Mr. Ringrose, who has mentioned nobody by name. I got it from my knowledge of your character, Weaver, which will lead you to the gallows if you're not careful, and from my observation to-day of the amount of work you have done, which is *nil*. What have you got to say for yourself?'

Whatever Weaver's faults may have been, he had the virtue of courage. As he was in for it, he thought he might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. 'I would rather go to the gallows, sir, than be kept in five afternoons running,' he said, with a bright inflection of voice.

The Form looked anxiously at Mr. Cartwright. Sometimes a bold speech of this sort was admitted. It all depended on his mood.

It was not rebuked now. 'You will certainly be kept in for the full time,' replied Mr. Cartwright. 'So will——' he mentioned the names of about a dozen boys, who had been the worst disturbers of peace. He had a wonderful eye for a culprit. He mentioned the names of half-a-dozen others, who might consider themselves released from further extra school. They included Henderson near the top of the Form, and Jimmy at the bottom. 'The rest I'm not sure about yet,' he said. 'They will come to-morrow.'

He put on his cap again and stood up, then looked round the Form and said: 'Mr. Ringrose asked me to let you all off. His idea seems to be that it was as much his fault as yours that so little work has been done. It isn't my idea.'

With that he left them, with the general impression that he wasn't such a bad old sort after all.

(*Continued on page* 354.)

JACK AND HIS STRANGE PETS.

FEW people have a stronger fondness for animals than the British bluejacket. Not only are monkeys and parrots among his favourites, but dogs, cats, and even such odd things as a pig and an opossum. For instance, His Britannic Majesty's ship *Glasgow* has had a pig on board as her sailor's pet. The animal was found swimming about in the waters of the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Juan Fernandez (Robinson Crusoe's island) after the German warship *Dresden* went down to the bottom, and at once, though a strong current was running out to sea, a sailor dived overboard and rescued the pig. From that time 'Dennis' became the *Glasgow's* pet. Again, in H.M.S. *Superb* an opossum was the ship's pet, while the great warship *Iron Duke* has 'Spot,' a dog, which was rescued when the battleship saved the crew of the steamer *Scotsdyke*, which was on fire. The captain of the steamer offered 'Spot' to the men of the *Iron Duke*, and eagerly they took him for their pet.

Among the most famous of Jack's pets is the bulldog that was presented to H.M.S. *Tiger*. He is a very fine fellow, and very fond of all the officers and men. When the *Tiger* was going into battle on May 31st, 1916, off the coast of Jutland, the men were very concerned about their favourite, not knowing how he would take the terrible crashing of the shots and shells hitting the ship. However, their captain made everything right for the bulldog. They filled his ears with thick pads of cotton wadding, and wrapped wadding round his head, and then a shawl, just as if he had a very painful attack of toothache, and a couple of bluejackets, who were not well enough to fight in the action, were ordered to take the dog, much to his annoyance, to a very quiet and secure cabin.

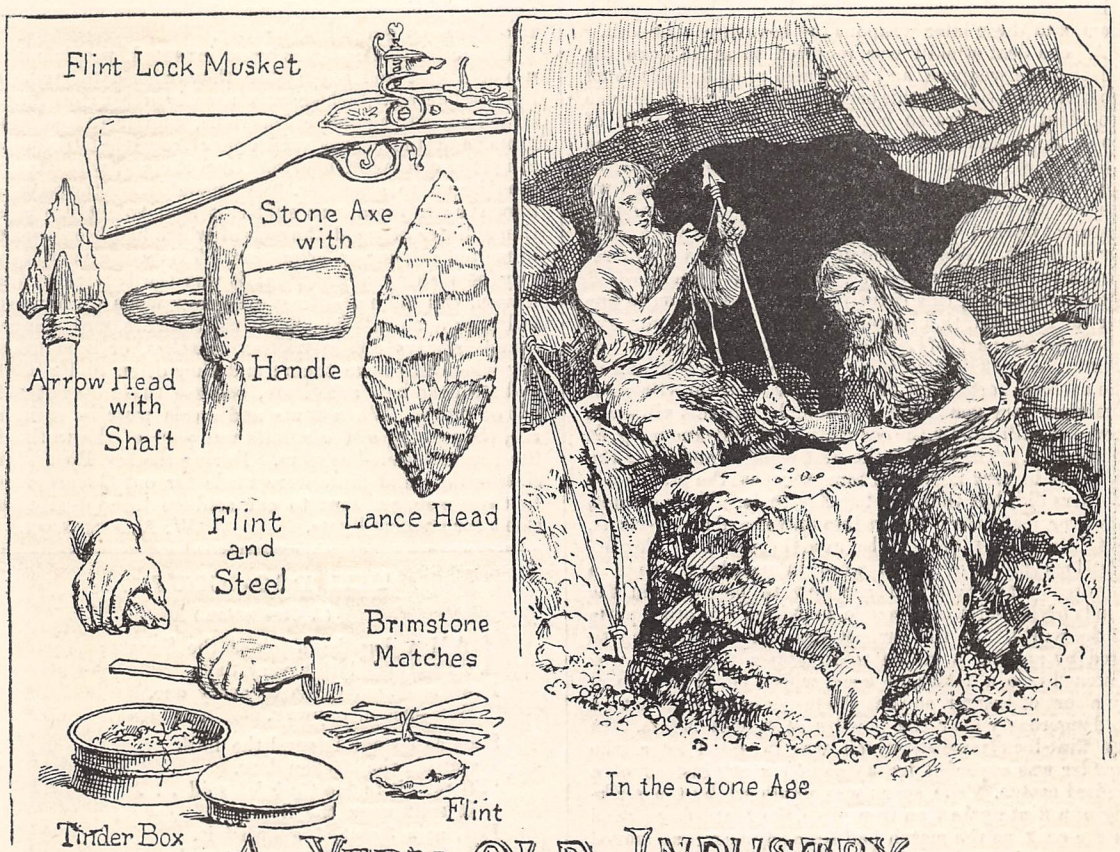
The bulldog at first did not at all fancy being treated like a sick puppy, and was quarrelsome; but when the shots began to thud like thunder on the armour of the great ship he took it all very badly, and was exceedingly glad and thankful to find he had a shipmate on each side of him holding him by his collar and paws.

In another British warship the men had a little bantam, who, as a rule, strutted about more proudly than the cheekiest midshipman, and with as big a show of courage as the bravest man in the British Navy; but when the first shell exploded in the air overhead, the bantam lost all his fine brave airs, and flew—down one of the ventilators! When afterwards he was rescued, he had not only a humble but a very bedraggled appearance. A photograph was taken of him in this dejected guise, but even the fact that a print of it now hangs in a prominent place in the officers' wardroom has not been a lesson in humility to 'Banty,' who, now that he is recovered and hears no fighting, struts about the deck with as much make-believe courage as before. Another ship had a fine black cat, called 'Tom,' but when the fight began he got so frightened that he struggled loose, and took a flying dive overboard, and so was drowned.

A. TEGNIER.

"WHERE ARE WE?"

(A Story without Words.)



A VERY OLD INDUSTRY.

WHAT is the oldest kind of work? That seems a strange question to ask, and a difficult one to answer. But if we think over the matter for a little while, we shall form some idea of the kind of answer which we must give, even if we cannot make it quite so exact as we should like.

Men work in order to satisfy their wants of various kinds. It is true that they receive wages in return for their labour; but as they spend their wages in buying food, clothing, houses to live in, and other things which they require, it is quite correct to say that they work to supply their needs. The most pressing need is for something to eat and drink, and therefore the first and the most urgent work which man undertakes is that connected with the obtaining of food. Agriculture is, therefore, one of the oldest kinds of work. It is not, however, the oldest. If we study the habits of savages, we soon find that men obtain food by hunting and fishing before they have learned anything about agriculture; and though we do not usually think of hunting and fishing as kinds of work, they really are such, and, perhaps, the oldest in the world.

Men cannot hunt and fish successfully without weapons and implements. The simplest weapons are made of wood, bone, and stone, and we know that these are also the oldest kinds of weapon. Long before history was written, and even before iron and the other useful metals were known, men were using hammer-heads, knives, axes, arrow-heads, and other weapons of stone, and these weapons are frequently found buried in the ground to-day. Most of them are made of flint, a hard, compact, and rather glass-like stone, which is found in the form of rounded pebbles, or nodules, lying in some of the beds of chalk. The flint pebbles are rather brittle, and they are easily broken into long splinters by a sharp blow. The prehistoric men, the men, that is, who lived before the times when history was written, made their knives, axes, and arrow-heads from these splinters by chipping little bits off them, and so dressing them to the required shape. The weapons were at first used in their chipped and roughly-formed state; but at

a later time the weapon-makers learned how to polish them, and these later weapons are beautifully smooth.

A good deal of skill was required to make even the oldest stone weapons, and some men must have devoted most of their time to this occupation in order to become proficient, the more so because they had only tools of stone, wood, and bone with which to work. In some places vast collections of waste splinters, and of weapons broken in the making, have been found, and we are led to the conclusion that these places were prehistoric 'workshops,' where the flint weapons were made for a district. The making of flint weapons was, therefore, a true industry, and it was a very old one.

Strange to say, this industry is still carried on in one part of England, though for a rather different purpose. The greater part of Norfolk and the western part of Suffolk have chalk immediately beneath the soil, and in the extreme north-west of Suffolk, around the village of Brandon, very good flints are found. In this village a few men still follow the occupation of flint-knapping, as it is called. They break the flint pebbles, and dress the splinters in very much the same way that the prehistoric workers did, but they use handier tools. They do not, however, make the splinters into knives and arrow-heads, but into 'gun-flints,' to be used in the old-fashioned flint-lock muskets, which were in use in England a hundred years ago, and are now to be found in the hands of less-civilised people in Africa and other parts of the world. In the earliest firearms the powder was fired by putting a match to it. Then the match was fastened into a holder, or cock, which could be moved by a sort of trigger, so that the firer's hand need not be so dangerously near the powder as it was before. In the flint-lock musket, which was invented later, the powder was exploded by means of a spark instead of a lighted match. The spark was produced by the striking of a flint against an iron plate, the flint being placed in the cock, as the match had formerly been, and moved by means of a spring which was released by the trigger.

When all our soldiers were armed with flint-lock muskets, a great many flints were required, as they were continually wearing out or being lost. In course of time a means of firing the guns by percussion caps made of copper was invented, and the old flint-lock weapons went out of use in England, and large numbers of them were sold to barbarous and savage people, who still use them, and require flints for them. It is these flints which the men at Brandon make.

The rounded flint-stones are dug out of shallow pits in the chalk heaths near Brandon, and the men use in these pits a peculiar kind of single-pronged pick, which, in its general shape, is very like the picks made out of the antlers of deer which the prehistoric flint-miners employed. The best kinds of flint may be twenty feet or so below the surface of the ground. When the shaft has been dug down to the bed of flints, galleries are run out horizontally, and as many of the flints as may be conveniently removed in this way are taken out, after which a new shaft is made in another place.

The flint-workers break the large blocks into smaller pieces, or 'quarters,' with the help of a heavy hammer. Each quarter is then splintered into small, sharp flakes, and lastly, each of these is trimmed into square, sharp-edged pieces suitable for muskets. The latter operation is what is properly known as flint-knapping, and it is performed by striking the edges of the flakes with a sharp-edged hammer. The flint-knappers grow very expert at their work, and some of them can make about two thousand gun-flints in a day.

Before friction matches were invented, people made use of a flint and steel when they wished to strike a light. The steel, which was usually a bent one, was struck smartly against a flint flake, similar to the gun-flints, and the sparks which flew from the steel were caught in a mass of charred linen threads, which very soon began to smoulder. The smouldering thread was blown until there was sufficient heat to set fire to a thin splinter of wood, the ends of which had been dipped in melted sulphur or brimstone. This was a very slow way of making a light, but it was the best that was known, and there are times even now when we have to fall back upon it. Soldiers in the trenches, for instance, cannot always obtain friction matches, or keep them dry when they have them; and they often find a flint and steel the best substitute, because these do not get out of order. When flints and steels were in regular use, the making of these flints was part of the work of the Brandon flint-knappers. During the last Boer War sixteen thousand flints were made for our Government by these men, and sent to our soldiers to be used with steels for striking lights. W. A. Atkinson.

THE DOG-SCOUT.

(A Recitation.)

I AM a dog that's joined the Scouts;
I've joined this very day;
I've done kind deeds to every one,
But—listen, anyway.

Soon as I woke I found the milk
Outside the kitchen door.
'I'll take it in for Cook,' I said . . .
It spilt upon the floor.
But, as a Scout, I guarded it,
Till who should come around,
But next-door Puss to lick the milk
That streamed about the ground.
'I am a Scout!' I barked. 'Bow-wow!
Don't you come stealing here,
Or it will be a Scout-like deed
To punish you, I fear!'
But perhaps she'd never heard of Scouts,
Or perhaps—well, I don't know,
But all at once I dashed at her,
And pinned her down below,
And fur went flying all about,
And Cook came rushing in,
And scolded me—a *Scout* forsooth!—
For causing all the din!

So then I went upstairs to see
If some one I could find
Who'd understand how good I was
If I did something kind.
And there were Master's shooting-boots,
Muddy, outside his door.
'At last,' I said, 'I'll take them down'—
No true Scout could do more—
'And wash them in the water-butt!'
So that is what I did;
At least I'd dropped them in, you know,
When Cook came . . . Then I hid,
For, if she doesn't understand,
She's better left alone.

Well, soon she left off being cross,
And brought a meaty bone,
And laid it by my kennel, and
Called to me, and I heard,
And then stopped hiding, and came out
And looked at it. My word,
It *was* a bone! And I was glad,
For scouting's hungry work,
Especially if you're like me,
And never try to shirk
A single kind thing you can do.
Well, I began to eat,
And suddenly a kind thought came:
'P'r'aps Cook would like this treat,'
Said I. 'For, though she's very cross,
Yet maybe she'd find out
That I am really very good,
And that I am a Scout.
If I don't eat this bone myself,
But give it her instead!' . . .
I crept upstairs like any mouse,
And laid it on her bed!
Wow! Wow! I scarce can think of it,
The whipping that I got;
For Cookie came upstairs to dress,
And found me on the spot,
Just tucking in that juicy bone
Under her sheet, you see,
And thrashed me—yes, she did, indeed—
A good Scout-dog like me!

I'm sick and sore and very sad;
I've tried to do, I'm sure,
Good deeds the whole long day-time through,
And no Scout can do more.
But I have had enough of it;
No longer will I be
A Scout. It's time Cook joined instead,
And did kind deeds to me!

ETHEL TALBOT.

HELD TO RANSOM.

BY V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 338.)

CHAPTER XVII.

ACHMET made his astonishing statement with a grave simplicity which was more convincing than any amount of exaggerated eloquence.

There was an instant of strained silence before Captain Harland broke out vehemently: 'Dick—Sandy . . . you hear these lies? But you don't believe them—you trust me, surely?'

'Of course we do!' Dick declared emphatically and loyally, facing the Moor with flushed cheeks and clenched fists. 'We don't believe a word of it! How dare you say such things, Achmet—how dare you?'

'He is deceiving you as he has deceived many—Believers and Nazarani alike;' the Moor spoke quite dispassionately and calmly. 'He holds faith with neither the one nor the other, this renegade—always ready to sell himself to the highest bidder. I know him well; his name is Langridge, and very ill it is for him that he has fallen into our hands. Yet he would be safe with neither army, since he has betrayed both the Sultans.'

The eyes of the two boys met almost furtively; into those of Sandy there had crept a shadow of doubt, but Dick broke out with fierce vehemence: 'I don't believe it—I won't believe it! Prove it if you can, Achmet!'

'Yes—prove it!' It was Captain Harland who spoke with bitter defiance. 'These boys did not accept my story without reason; I satisfied them that I was their father.'

'Of course you did!' Sandy caught at the remembrance with desperate relief. 'He knew all sorts of things that he couldn't have otherwise—all about that book you brought to us—and the treasure . . .'

The Moor nodded gravely, but in a manner that showed he was quite unconvinced. After a short pause he spoke again, very slowly: 'Can he tell you the name of him at whose house in the great city I found you—him who is your uncle, his own sister's husband?'

'Uncle Tom, do you mean? Why, of course father knows his name! Don't you?' Dick laughed with relief as he turned towards Captain Harland. But the amusement died from his face when he saw the other's strange expression.

For a moment there was utter silence; then Harland laughed in his turn, and spoke in jerky sentences: 'Your uncle Tom . . . why, of course! . . . naturally I know his name . . . what a ridiculous question!'

'Then . . . tell us,' came the quiet, insistent voice of the Moor.

'Thomas . . . why, I've forgotten for the moment . . . It's so long since I saw him—and I always had a bad memory for names. I really never knew him well . . .'

The feigned lightness was cleverly assumed, but it rang false. Through it broke Achmet's inexorable voice: 'You have a bad memory for names, you say, Roumi? That is unfortunate. But, come, I will not try your powers too much. I will ask you a far easier question—one which no man could fail to answer without hesitation. Tell us the name of your wife, the mother of these lads.'

Again there was silence. It was broken by Dick, and there was desperate pleading in the boy's voice: 'Father! . . . Father! . . . do say quickly! Of course you know—of course you can tell him Mother's name!'

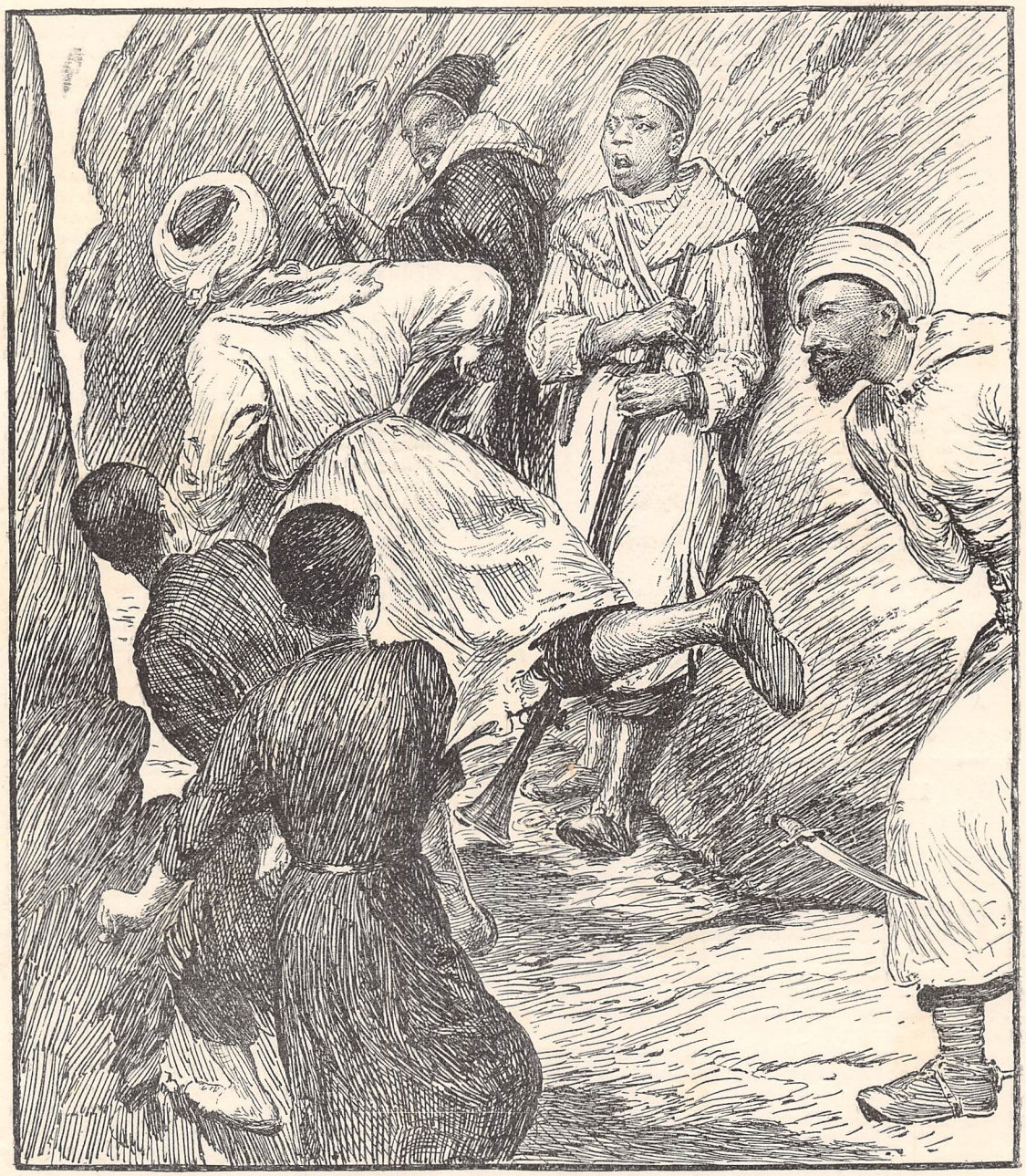
There came no answer. Then both boys, turning together, saw the fear, the shame, the anger written upon the man's face, and knew that Achmet had spoken the truth. There was no need for any further proof; there scarcely seemed need for further words.

Still quite calmly and dispassionately, the Moor spoke: 'I think I have proved that this dog of a Nazarani is not your father.'

Suddenly, and without warning, Langridge made a dash for the path, which was the only way of escape from the cave. Even Achmet was taken by surprise and swerved aside momentarily to let him pass. One of the Moors who barred the way behind their leader was flung headlong against the rock face; the others gave way. Langridge was past them in an instant, and running at full speed along the narrow path.

It was then that Dick was struck with a sudden remembrance. 'Sandy . . . Achmet!' he gasped. 'He's got the paper that shows the way to find the treasure . . . I gave it to him . . . when I believed that he was Father . . .'

'Oh, Dick . . . he will get there before us . . . he will take it away . . . besides, we don't know exactly where to look.' (*Continued on page* 359.)



"Langridge made a dash for the path, which was the only way of escape."

CHATTERBOX.

DAVID COPPERFIELD AND THE WAITER AT YARMOUTH—

"*I'll* drink it, if you like. I'm used to it." (*David Copperfield*, Chap. V.)

FROM A DRAWING BY HUGH THOMSON.

"There were shouts of encouragement."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Unacrgraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 347.)

CHAPTER XXII.

ALL the school assembled for the Lower Steeplechase, the start of which was at a marsh farm about two miles from the town. There was a field of between twenty and thirty, the great majority of which had no expectation of winning, but had entered for the sake of the fun.

Mr. Cartwright was the starter. He had been a great sportsman before his gout and his always-increasing stoutness had lessened his activities, and part of the hold he maintained over the boys with whom he had to do was owing to the interest he still shared in games and sports. He rode out to the starting-point on a horse, and told some of the older boys that he was going to ride over the course after he had started the race.

It was a fine, windy March day. The great arch of sky that rose over the flat fenny country was broken by fleecy clouds, that raced over the blue expanse as if they were enjoying themselves too. Apart from the excitements of the race altogether, a run of three miles across open country on such a brisk, invigorating day would be a very pleasurable experience.

The race began with two hundred yards over grass. Most of the competitors took it easily enough, knowing that they would want most of their energies later, but a few of the younger ones pounded ahead, so as to get the easiest places in the fence that formed the first obstacle. They were accompanied over this field by most of those who had watched the start. The rest of the school was scattered at various points along the course, where failures might be expected to take place, or successes to be worth watching.

The fence was mostly a quickset hedge, but between the guiding flags were several gaps protected by posts and rails. The rails were just too high for all but grown boys to jump. The Upper Boys would all jump them, or try to, when their race came, but of the Lower Boys only two tried to do so. One of them was Weaver, whose long legs took him over in magnificent hurdling style. He had raced a little towards the end of the field so as to get a clear run, and started on the second field well ahead of anybody else. Then he slowed down a little. The extra effort had been worth while, but he wanted to keep himself well in hand. Repington, the other boy who had tried for a jump, failed to clear the fence, but scrambled over without losing much, and was a good second to Weaver. Jimmy and Henderson chose their respective gaps and vaulted over quite neatly, but Henderson had to wait at his while a smaller boy, who had nipped in in front of him, tumbled himself over. Jimmy was well ahead of him in the second field.

This was also grass, and was bounded by a dyke. The dyke was a fair jump for big boys, a difficult one for smaller ones. But it was bridged over in two places between the flags. Each of these openings was protected by a gate. Weaver made straight for the dyke and jumped it clear, thus further increasing his lead. Repington also jumped it, but took off badly and landed on his knees. Four other boys in front of Jimmy made for the gate that was in the middle of the course. The other one was on its right, and Jimmy made for it as he had decided to do, though it took him out of the line. Henderson took the dyke. It was a big jump for him, and he just managed it, though he fell when he landed. Jimmy, throwing a look to the left out of the corner of his eye, congratulated himself on having resisted the temptation to try the dyke. If Henderson could only just get over, he knew that he would not have reached the other side. He had his gate to himself, and got over it well, just as the last of the four boys who had made for the other gate got over that. He had lost ground, and Henderson was now in front of him, as well as another bigger boy who had also jumped the dyke. But he had done about as well as it was in his power to do so far, and must look to gain whatever advantage he could later on.

The next field was a stiff plough, which Jimmy plodded over manfully, knowing from past experience of running with basset hounds near his home that a plough is not so serious as it looks if you take it in the proper way. What exactly that way is it would be difficult to say, but any one who has followed hounds on foot gets to know it by intuition. As it happened, neither Weaver, Repington, nor Henderson had had any experience of this form of sport, and Jimmy gained on them slowly, and not only that but arrived at the gate through which the course ran less affected by the heavy going than either of the three of them. He also left behind those of the younger boys who had forged ahead of him.

But in the meantime two other of the bigger boys who had not got much of a start, had made it up, and were going strong. They were twin brothers, called Knox, whose father hunted a pack of beagles in Lincolnshire, and they knew perhaps rather more about holding themselves together over a stiff plough than Jimmy did. They were as like as two peas, and did everything together. If they succeeded in getting in ahead of the rest, the steeplechase was likely to end in a draw, which had never happened before. Jimmy could hardly help laughing as he saw them jogging along together abreast like the two carriage-horses which had been taken out hunting and thrown their riders in that delightful picture of Randolph Caldecott's.

Next came a stretch of road a quarter of a mile long. Jimmy settled down to this at the steady pace which he had found by long practice to be comfortably within his powers. This was one of the points at which his careful training came in. He knew just what he could do, and was not worried by wondering whether he could go a little faster or ought to go a little slower. And the absence of that sort of worry is a big factor in preserving energy.

Henderson also knew how fast he could conveniently go, and his pace was a trifle faster than Jimmy's. Jimmy knew that. He had nearly caught him up at the gate, and now saw him getting slowly away from him without any anxiety at all. His turn would come later, or so he hoped.

Mr. Cartwright passed him, trotting along on his big horse. In spite of his unwieldy build and his short legs he looked at home in the saddle. He looked down at Jimmy as he passed him and said: 'That's right, keep yourself in hand,' and Jimmy felt pleased at being noticed by him, and admired his seat as he rode on. For he knew who could ride and who couldn't, and that it was not easy for a short, stout man to accommodate

himself to the trot of a big horse. Mr. Cartwright was a good sort, after all, though strict enough in all conscience. But everybody in Lower Fourth had forgiven him for his late severity, and nobody had been kept in for the full five days after all. Boys don't bear malice, which is one of the nice things about them.

At the end of the road the marsh proper began suddenly, and here Jimmy thought his chance would come, for after another stretch of grass there was nearly a mile of pole work, and he and Henderson, and Pilling, who had been left quite behind at the start, had practised that assiduously, and Jimmy and Henderson were dabs at it. But Jimmy thought he was just a little bit better than Henderson.

On the other side of the grass field was a marsh farm, and beyond it the ground was divided by dykes, which came at regular and fairly short intervals. Most of them could be jumped easily, but every now and then came one that couldn't. It was a famous snipe-ground, and sportsmen were always accompanied by a native carrying a long pole with a thick piece of wood attached to it. At each of the bigger dykes he took the guns of the sportsmen, and they swung themselves over the dyke with the pole. It was rather nervous work at first. You planted the 'shoe' of the pole obliquely in the mud at the bottom of the dyke, and swung yourself over. Until you arrived at the top of the swing and were let gently down upon the other side, you had qualms as to whether you were not going to be left hanging over the water. But these fears soon dispersed, as it was seen how easy and even pleasant the process was.

But to get the best results out of this sort of work in a race meant a good deal more than taking the pole and swinging yourself over as deliberately and carefully as you pleased. In the first place, the poles had to be carried all the way by the runners. They were heavy enough to make a great deal of difference to a man, and to need every extra ounce of strength from a young boy. When Jimmy and Henderson had first tried a mile of these dykes, carrying poles, they had stopped short, completely exhausted, long before the end of it, and had thought it would be quite beyond their strength altogether. But gradually they had worked up to the full mile, had learnt how best to carry the poles and what pace they could go at between the dykes, so as to have something left at the end. They had also learnt by practice the best way of approaching the dykes, letting down the pole, and swinging themselves over, so that the least time should be wasted and the least energy.

But they had differed on one important point. Jimmy had found it less tiring to use his pole for the smaller dykes as well as the bigger ones, but Henderson had decided to jump them carrying the pole. Henderson was rather stronger than Jimmy, but even then it was doubtful whether he gained the advantage, though of course it took him appreciably less time to jump the small dykes than it did Jimmy to swing himself over. If everything went well with him, he would get over the whole ground so much quicker that even if it took more out of him he would have a lead at the end so big that Jimmy could hardly expect to catch him up. But, as a matter of fact, it never had gone exactly right with him, in practice, for so long as a mile. He had never been quite so clever or steady as Jimmy at pole work, and running between the bigger dykes and jumping the smaller ones unsteadied him still more. When they had raced together over a mile of this country in their respective fashions, Henderson had sometimes won and sometimes Jimmy, but Jimmy had always arrived at the end in better condition to continue a race than Henderson. Henderson had tried Jimmy's plan once or twice, but after the very first Jimmy had always beaten him at that, and he had given it up.

The farm at which this piece of marsh-land began was the one to which Jimmy had been taken after his accident on the ice. The farmer was under contract to supply the number of poles needed for the steeplechases, and they were all laid out in a row, ready for the boys to pick up and take with them. Jimmy had maintained his friendship with the farmer and his wife, and had introduced Henderson and Pilling to them. They had enjoyed a good deal of kindness and refreshment of an acceptable order on their visits to the farm, and the farmer had given them valuable advice upon the use of the pole. It was he who had first advised Jimmy to conserve his strength by using his pole over the smaller dykes. 'It's what boys as small as you should do,' he said, and had been inclined to shake his head at Henderson's not taking the same course. 'But you're not as happy at it as Master Henshaw,' he had said, when he had seen them practise, 'and perhaps the other plan's better for you.'

When Jimmy arrived on the edge of the marsh, Weaver and Repington were a good way ahead. Neither of them had taken poles at all. About half the boys who entered for the Upper Steeplechase did not do so. Nearly all the larger dykes could be taken by a good jumper, but there were three that couldn't, and these had to be got into and out of in a way that lost much time and still more energy. It was very exhausting, besides, to take a series of small jumps and quite a number of very big ones over so long a distance. Still, the advantage in speed was so great that the Upper Steeplechase had been won by boys not using poles nearly as many times as by those who had. The Lower Steeplechase had never been won without them, as no boy had ever been big enough or strong enough to stand the strain.

Weaver and Repington were both unusually big and strong for their age, but Jimmy had a great sense of relief when he saw them running over the marsh, taking the smaller dykes in their stride, even although the lead they were establishing seemed almost hopeless to reduce. He knew that it wasn't so. It was part of his character that he could take long views, and his friend, the farmer, who was waiting for him, encouraged him in his belief by saying, 'You needn't fear them two in front, anyhow—they can't keep that pace up for long.'

The twin Knoxes were also well ahead, both using their poles quite cleverly. They were handy boys at all field sports, although not very strong. Jimmy knew that they had not practised much, but also that they were used to this sort of work in the country in which they lived. The twins were not to be despised by any means. Perhaps they were more of dark horses than anybody else whom Jimmy had occasion to fear.

Henderson was also ahead, and as Jimmy took his first little dyke, which at this stage he could so easily have jumped, carrying his pole, it seemed to him that the process he knew to be the best in the long-run was an intolerably slow one. At the second dyke the five boys were still further ahead of him, and had all

increased their lead to an appalling extent by the time he reached the first big dyke. He had a qualm.

As he swung himself over the first big dyke his confidence returned to him—he was in the vein for it. It came as natural for him to use the pole as to use his legs. All he had to do was to go on steadily and trust to the others to make some mistake, or, rather, to the breakdown of their methods. He couldn't do better than he was doing in any case, and all he had to do was to keep it up and hope for the best.

The other five boys were now far in front of him, and these five were all that had counted up till now. But as he swung himself over the first big dyke another boy called Wilmot came up behind him, and took it at about the same time. Jimmy thought he had already shaken off all the rest; but as Wilmot ran ahead and jumped the smaller dykes, carrying his pole, he had some misgivings, and insensibly quickened his pace. But he knew that wouldn't do him any good, and made himself slow down again to his steady, resolute jog-trot. Wilmot took the second big dyke well ahead of him, and the third more ahead still. At the fourth Jimmy thought he had not increased his lead, at the fifth he had visibly caught him up, and at the sixth, which was one of the three biggest ones, Wilmot was finished.

There was a group of boys here, for this was one of the places in which something amusing was likely to occur. As Jimmy came up there were shouts of encouragement to him, some of it ironic, for he was a good long way behind the foremost, and more than a third of the mile had already been covered. He took the dyke beautifully with an easy swing, and the least possible interruption to his pace, so that the ironic cheers were merged in applause, and he heard some one say as he ran on, 'He's the best of the lot at it.'

(*Continued on page* 365.)

EYES THAT SEE:

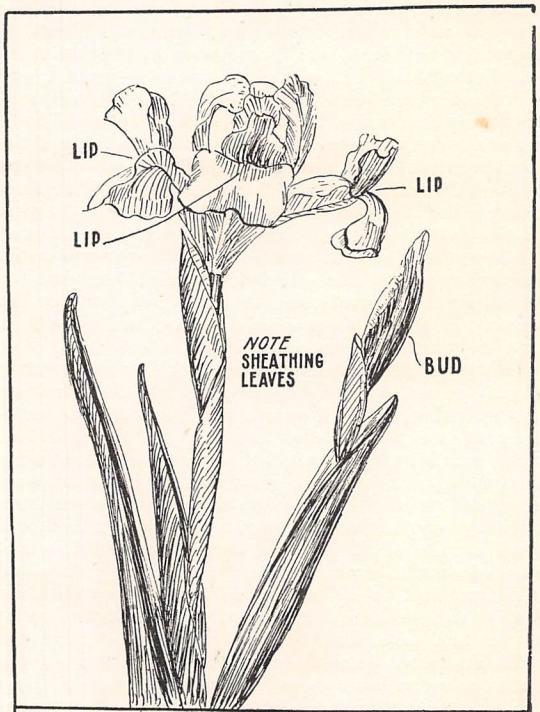
THINGS WE OFTEN OVERLOOK.

XI.—IN A GARDEN.

HAVE you ever thought what a true impression you can obtain of the dwellers in a house if you look at their garden? You walk down a street where there are small gardens in the front of the houses, and, so sure as you see a neat garden, so will you find a clean doorstep and neat windows. The outside of a house and the garden tell you much about the people inside!

If you know people who love their gardens, and can get them to talk about them (you being a sympathetic listener), they will tell you things and show you things of immense interest. On a glorious June morning I am sitting to write this article in a little suburban garden, the dearly-loved realm of a charming old lady of my acquaintance. Here she works among her beloved flowers on every possible occasion. She can tell you the history of every plant she possesses, and very interesting their histories are! At the present time the whole garden is a blaze of colour—'flaming June,' truly. I will tell you what I see as I just look up from my note-book. The ground is divided into flower-beds by a number of little grass paths, neatly cut. (Endless work, for when you finish cutting at one end of the garden the other end has grown!) These flower-beds are all bordered with Mrs. Simpkin pinks, the scent of which is wafted everywhere. Roses, deep red, pink of various shades, 'Gloire de Dijon,' and large, pure white, but scentless, 'Frau Karl Druschky,' masses of large blue Spanish Iris (fig. 1), clumps of blue and white Campanula, stately white and pink Foxgloves, four to five feet high, groups of Snapdragons, patches of pale yellow Day Lilies, pyramids of Canterbury Bells, and Heartsease everywhere.

Further up the garden are several almost round bushes of Lavender, giving promise of plenty of bloom in due season, for they are covered with sharp upstanding stalks, with clusters of buds at the tops. Honeysuckle clambers over an arch, and masses of Everlasting Pea just showing for bloom. These peas are both pink and white, the latter being a feature of this garden in its season. This white variety is most beautiful



1. SPANISH IRIS. FLOWER, BUD, & LEAVES

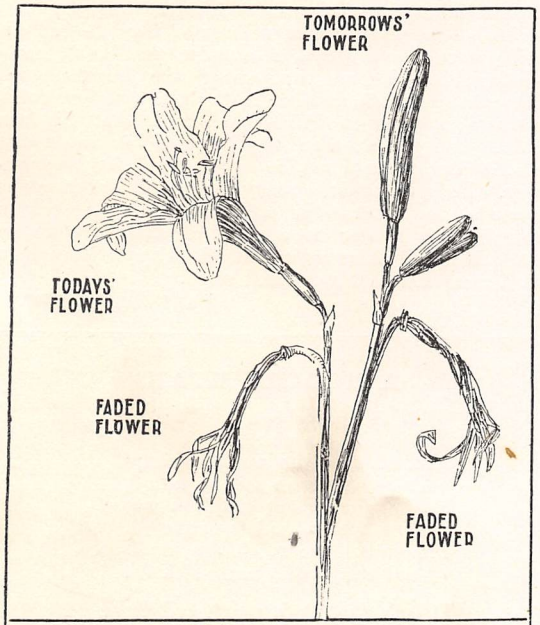
and a very useful flower for gathering; in fact, my Garden Lady tells me it *likes* being cut! Look as you may, you will find no 'bedding-out' flowers; it is not a '*gardener's* garden,' where to pluck a flower upsets the plan of things! This is the garden of one who believes that the more flowers you gather and give away the more will grow! Every one who comes here goes away laden with bouquets of these dear old-fashioned, sweet-scented flowers.

I expect you know most of the flowers I have mentioned, but fig. 2 shows you a spray of Day Lily, which perhaps is new to you. They are called Day Lilies because they are open full for twenty-four hours, and then fade and hang down, as you see two on this stem. They are of a very delicate lemon yellow, and they have an advantage to make up for their short lives. If a spray is gathered it will go on growing and developing its buds in water, and it is very interesting to watch.

Have you noticed what odd expressions the pansies have? Some look coy and shy, others seem laughing; others, again, have a queer twist which seems to give them a questioning look.

I have just been watching a very busy Bumble Bee; his orders this morning seem to take him to the Spanish Iris and the Snapdragon. It is very fascinating to see him sit on one of the three lips of the Iris, and force it down enough to allow him to walk in; if you look carefully you can see him extend his long proboscis to the furthest extent of that cavern formed by the leafy pistil. Of course his fat body rubs up against the stamens, and he comes out dusted with pollen, and also, of course, this pollen is naturally caught up by the pistil at another visit. When Mr. Bumble Bee goes to call on the Snapdragon he has to force his way in, and it is most wonderful to see him push at the upper part of the flower in order to force the lip down, and thus obtain entrance.

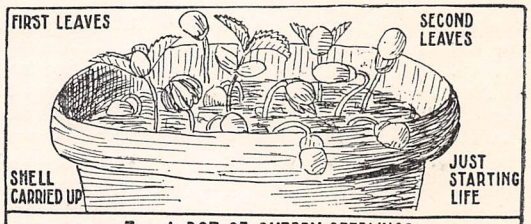
I have been rather puzzled by a queer tapping sound that I could not for some time locate; when I moved or made a noise it ceased, but, after getting the direction, I moved to a seat nearer the sound. Then it was explained, and I found that I was a spectator of an execution, for a large thrush was calmly cracking snail-shells on a stone step. He would pick up the poor old snail, and whack! whack! whack! he would bang the shell on the stone; then put it down, and with his sharp little eyes examine results! When he succeeded in breaking the shell he quickly polished off



2. SPRAY OF DAY-LILY

Mr. Snail, and was off for another! This was his stone of execution, and my Garden Lady told me that it had been used for that purpose for years, and often there was quite a collection of shells to be moved! If at any time you hear a queer tapping when in a garden, you watch—for Mr. Thrush is well worth seeing at this little job.

That step was one of several which led to a jolly little rock-garden. Here is a riot of small plants, all fighting to get the upper hand, but kept in order by their owner.



3. A POT OF CHERRY SEEDLINGS

'The survival of the fittest'—that is the strongest—is seen in a rock-garden to a marked degree. I remember being away from my rock-garden once for two months, and when I came back there was only one kind of plant to be seen, and that was everywhere! It was a very strong form of Saxifrage; but I soon cleared it away, and gave breathing space to the other plants. But had the Saxifrage been left much longer it would have been 'monarch of all he surveyed.'

I see a lot of interesting plants in this rock-garden. Masses of dark blue Veronica are the chief feature, but there are several fine specimens of wild Orchis, one Purple Spotted being nearly three feet high, and having a truss of bloom quite five inches long! I never saw such a fellow; he has been in this garden four years, I hear, and has evidently found 'something he likes.' My Garden Lady has made a speciality of bringing wild flowers to her garden, and I find Herb-Robert, Yellow Pimpernel, Rock Rose, and many Orchis all growing quite happily; also sprays of that dainty little green flower, Lady's Mantle.

A feature of this garden is the number of fruit trees which have been grown from *seed!* Chief among them is a magnificent Cherry-tree. It is now about sixteen or eighteen years old, and produces the most wonderful White Heart cherries. People always say that of course the tree has been grafted (which is the usual method with fruit trees), but it has never been touched, which proves that grafting is not always required. In another part there are two more cherry-trees—cooking cherries this time; they are growing so close together that they look like one! They have grown from two of a handful of stones thrown out at some time. Here is a family in a pot (fig. 3). These have got their first four cherries this year, and the Garden Lady is most anxious to see whether they will ripen. Then there is a Walnut-tree grown from a walnut. I am told it came in some manure, and was discovered with two leaves. It is now about fifteen feet high, and produces quite a number of nuts.

While I write the Garden Lady is busily tying up here, capturing a weed there, and generally shedding her love over it all; she tells me she is never so happy as when in her garden, and that gardening is a fine cure for bad temper! I do not think she knows much about bad temper, but there is undoubtedly truth in the words:

'You are nearer God's heart in a garden
Than anywhere else on earth.'

E. M. Barlow.

HORSE-LORE.

THERE are many curious stories and beliefs about horses. According to the Greeks, these animals were first created by Poseidon, or Neptune, who disputed with Athene as to which of them should give a name to Athens, and it was decided that the one who gave the most useful gift to man should have the privilege. Athene, or Minerva, created the olive-tree, and Neptune the horse; but the vote was given to Athene, after whom the city was named. This is said to have been because the horse was the emblem of war, the olive of peace, and the latter was thought the better gift.

Perhaps it is partly because of this fabled connection with the sea-god, that so many legends tell of horses rising from seas, lakes, and streams. Northern tales describe Sleipnir, the eight-footed grey horse of Odin, which could cross the sea as easily as the land—some say Sleipnir is the wind. In Iceland there is said to be a water-horse, 'Nick,' or 'Hnickur.' He is supposed to be grey, with hoofs turned backwards, and one special Nick is said to have eight feet and ten heads. When the ice breaks up after the long, cold winter, Nick is supposed to be rising to the surface. It is thought that he coaxes young people to mount him, and then dashes into the water; but it is possible to tame Nick, if one is careful never to take off his bridle.

In the Shetlands, the water-horse is called 'Nick' and 'Shoopultie.' He is said to be easily tamed, and will work all day, but at night he plays strange pranks. In the Orkneys, people speak of a pretty little water-horse, whose mane is always covered with weeds. In Ireland there are a number of stories of water-horses, who rise from lakes and streams, and lure people to mount them, when they are either drowned or carried in a frantic race through stream and bog, brake and brier, till, worn out and terrified, they are flung off by the enchanted steed.

A belief in the Phooka, or Fairy Horse, lingers in some parts of Ireland. He is supposed to be a wicked fairy, often appearing in the form of a fine jet-black horse, with fiery eyes, who comes up in a friendly way to benighted travellers, and induces them to mount him. Then the Phooka dashes off furiously, carrying his terrified rider into all kinds of dangerous places, till, at the break of day, he stops short, snorts, and throws the luckless person over his head into a bog-hole, stream, or quarry! This unpleasant animal is also supposed to assume the shape of a black bull, goat, or bat, or even to appear as the compound of several animals—horse, cow, and goat!

There are many Irish legends of white horses. On May morning the great chieftain, the O'Donoughue of the Glens, is said to rise from his palace under the Lakes of Killarney, and ride across the water on a snow-white steed. Perhaps this is a poetical way of referring to the white crests of the waves on the lovely lakes, when they are ruffled by the mountain breezes.

The great Earl of Kildare is said to ride across the wide plains of the Curragh at midnight, at the end of every seven years, on a snow-white charger with silver shoes. He is holding the reins in his left hand, and a silver cup in his right. If he should appear without the cup, the line of Kildare is about to become extinct, and if the horse-shoes are worn out, a member of the family is supposed to be about to appear and destroy the enemies of Ireland.

The Saxons reverenced white horses, whose effigies appear cut in the chalk downs at Westbury, Wilts, and at Uffington, Berks, and in many other parts of England. Most of them are supposed to commemorate the victories of Alfred the Great over the Danes. A galloping white horse is the badge of the House of Hanover, and a prancing one of the county of Kent.

The Mohammedans highly esteem horses—not only the beautiful Arabs, but all species. A milk-white horse was said to have carried Mahomet from earth to the seventh heaven.

Many famous monarchs and soldiers rode on white horses. Napoleon crossed the Alps on 'Marengo,' the beautiful white charger which carried him on the Field of Waterloo; and Lord Roberts had a lovely little white Arab, 'Volonel,' his companion in several campaigns, which lived to a good old age.

'Black Bess,' the mare on whom Dick Turpin, the highwayman, rode from London to York, is almost as celebrated as her master. 'Black Agnes' was a beautiful palfrey much loved by Mary Queen of Scots, to whom she was given by Agnes, Countess of Dunbar. 'Black Saladin' was the war-horse of the great Earl of Warwick, the 'Kingmaker.'

In classic tales we read of the swift horses of the Sun, of Hercules, and Pluto—the last-mentioned being coal-black. 'Xanthos,' one of the horses of Achilles, was said to have informed the hero that his death was at hand, when it was unjustly blamed by him! Philip is said to have owed his name to his partiality for these animals—the word means 'a lover of horses'—and his still more famous son, Alexander the Great, early distinguished himself by taming the famous steed Bucephalus, which none of his father's courtiers could manage; whereupon Philip exclaimed that his son should conquer another kingdom, for his own realm of Macedonia would not be large enough for his greatness. Bucephalus lived many years, and was mortally wounded in a battle in India, but he succeeded in carrying his master to a place of safety before he dropped dead. Alexander built the city of Bucephala as a memorial to his faithful steed.

MAUD E. SARGENT.

A MODERN MOAN.

I'M the unluckiest of chaps
In all our nursery—
And all over the world, perhaps,
There's none so sad as me;
No disappointment could be worse
Than I have had to bear;
I'll really have to change my Nurse,
And choose the next with care!

It isn't that she's rough and cross,
Or shakes me in my pram—
She loves me very much, of course,
For, see how good I am!
But, oh! she's neither sense nor tact—
Through last night's Zeppelin raid
She never woke me! It's a *fact!*
SHE THOUGHT I'D BE AFRAID!

ETHEL TALBOT.

FIGHTING CRABS.

'Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For 'tis their nature to.'

SO, long ago, wrote good Doctor Isaac Watts, and some of us know, from sad experience, how very unpleasant it is to take out a dog which, though perfectly gentle in his behaviour to human beings, persists in fighting with almost every dog he meets in his walks abroad.

But it is not only dogs which have the bad taste to delight in warfare. Some crabs are great fighters. The most savage sort of crab lives in Japan. As soon as one of these crabs catches sight of another, he flies into a violent passion, and rubs his claws together. The challenge is at once accepted, and the two angry crabs go for each other, as the saying is, 'hammer and tongs.' They make a horrible grinding noise. The sand flies upward in thick clouds as the duellists push each other about, until the end comes. Then the weaker, or less clever of the two, tired, yet still defiantly scraping his claws together, stretches himself on the ground. The foe comes nearer, seizes one claw of the vanquished crab, pulls it off, and carries it away as a trophy.

E. DYKE.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. METHLEY.

(Continued from page 351.)

WITH a tightening of his stern jaw, Achmet was preparing to act. He swung round his musket, steadying it on his hip, and took deliberate aim at the flying figure, just as Langridge paused for an instant to glance back.

Acting on some instinct which he certainly could not have defined Dick sprang forward and laid a hand on the Moor's arm. 'No—don't shoot!' he cried. 'It seems so . . . anyway, please don't!'

Frowning, Achmet glanced at the boy, and in that bare instant of hesitation Langridge disappeared, out of reach, round a bend in the path. 'You should have let me shoot,' Achmet said, and there was stern disapproval in his voice.

'I . . . couldn't. . .' Dick flushed, half ashamed now at his own weakness. 'I don't know, but . . . oh, well, I dare say you wouldn't have hit him, anyhow.'

'I should not have missed,' the Moor said with entire conviction. 'But the chance has gone.'

'We must try to catch him—to take him prisoner.' Dick tried to appear resolute and merciless. 'And if he won't give up the paper—well, we'll see. There are lots of different ways over the rocks—I dare say we can cut him off. I know a path . . . I found it the other day.'

He led the way, eager to atone for his seeming softness by a great show of vigour, and Sandy and the Moors followed.

But a plan was forming itself in Dick's mind. He knew that if he could reach a certain point within the next few minutes he could cut off Langridge's escape. And, if so, surely the man would give up the paper to save his life, and if on his doing so Dick allowed him to go free.

With this object in view, Dick did not wait for his companions. It would be better if he outstripped them and tackled the fugitive alone. Active as a monkey, the boy scrambled up the face of the rock which looked almost unclimbable. He reached the top, crossed a four-foot cleft, and ran on, stumbling and recovering himself, jumping from rock to rock. He gained the jagged crest of the cliff, began to descend upon the other side, round the base of which the path curved by which Langridge was escaping.

It was very narrow at this point, and bounded on the other side by a sheer drop to the desert below of from thirty to forty feet. It was impossible for two people to pass each other . . . and at this moment Dick realised that he was in time. Not a hundred yards away Langridge came into sight, running towards him at full speed.

Dick scrambled down into the path, and stood facing the man bravely enough. As for Langridge, his brown face darkened, and he snarled rather than spoke: 'Get out of my way, you young fool! It'll go badly with any any one who stops me now!'

'I'll let you go free if you'll give me back that paper,' Dick declared. 'That's all I want of you; and you could escape before the others come.'

'You're very generous!' Langridge laughed derisively. 'Let me go, will you, you young fool? As if you could stop me!'

'Achmet and the others are coming . . .'

'Yes, but they're not here yet! Get out of my way, boy, I tell you.'

But Dick stood his ground, although his face whitened at the knowledge of what he saw in the man's fierce, desperate eyes. 'I won't,' he said, doggedly. 'Not unless you give me that paper.'

'That you'll never have! *Let me pass* . . .'

'You'll have to kill me first!'

'And d'you think I'll stop at that?' Langridge snarled. 'Will you move?'

'No!' Dick repeated, and stood squarely, with clenched fists, barring the way with his slim, boyish figure.

What followed passed very swiftly. Langridge swung forward, raising his arm; Dick swerved to avoid the blow falling on his head, and slipped sideways, treading on a loose stone, which gave way under his feet. The boy felt himself falling—clutched wildly at air . . . then was over the edge of the precipice.

With his finger-tips Dick just managed to touch a ledge as he fell, swung by one hand for a second, then got hold with the other, and hung suspended about half a dozen feet below the level of the path.

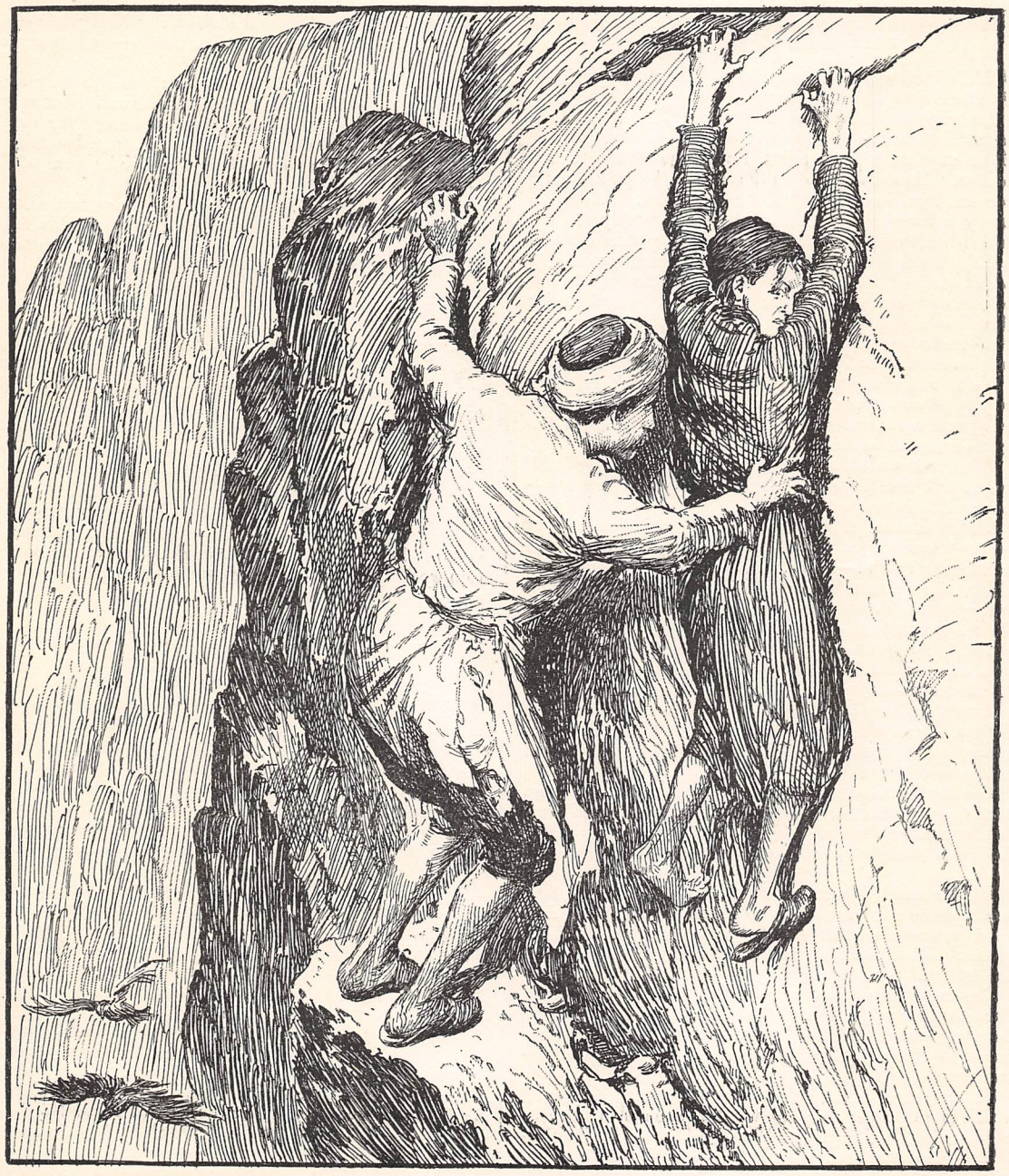
It needed only a minute to discover that it was an utter impossibility for him to drag himself up by that precarious handhold. It was only a question of hanging on for a few moments and then dropping . . .

The boy's white face was upraised towards the path above him; his strained, agonised eyes met those of Langridge. The man stood leaning forward over the edge. He had made no attempt to escape—to seize the plain opportunity offered to him.

Now he suddenly threw himself down upon his face, and, reaching over, tried to seize Dick's wrists. Even at the uttermost stretch of his arms it was impossible. He rose once more, and stood biting his lips, and glancing back at the way along which his pursuers would come. Anger, fear, and half-formed resolution were all on his face; plainly a fight was in progress within him against some power, very strong for good or evil.

(*Continued on page* 362.)

"Dick sprang forward and laid a hand on the Moor's arm. No, don't shoot!' he cried."



"'Don't try to move till I tell you.'"

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 359.)

STABS of agony shot through Dick's fingers: he knew that it would be utterly impossible to hold on for more than a few seconds longer. A cry for help rose to his lips, but he forced it back resolutely.

But at that same instant Langridge came to his decision. He sat down upon the edge of the path, swung over his legs, and began to lower himself. Afraid to stir by a hairsbreadth, Dick could only partly see his movements, and guess that he was feeling with his toes for a foothold on the cliff face. He seemed to find one almost at once; then lowered himself a little further.

Presently his voice spoke from close behind Dick: 'I'm standing on a ledge just below you; it's too narrow to support more than one. Don't try to move until I tell you; do exactly as I say . . .'

With a feeling of boundless relief Dick felt the support of two strong hands just beneath his shoulders, pressing him against the face of the cliff, relaxing the agonising strain on his finger-tips.

'We must wait for a few minutes,' Langridge said, coolly. 'I can hear those friends of yours coming—they will help you up.'

Almost instantly, Dick caught the sound of voices and footsteps on the path. Then a startled exclamation from Sandy: 'Oh!—Dick . . . look, Achmet, look!'

The voice from behind Dick spoke peremptorily, issuing orders in the manner of one accustomed to obedience. 'Don't ask questions or wait about, but do as I say, one of you; the boy is almost exhausted, and I can't hold on much longer. Reach down as far as you can; I'll raise him till you get a firm grip.'

It was Achmet himself who obeyed unquestioningly. He lay flat upon the path, stretching down his lean sinewy arms until his fingers rested against the rock, some two or three feet above Dick's head.

The boy felt that the man behind him drew a long, steadying breath; then he knew that he was being lifted, slowly and resolutely. His fingers lost their grip upon the ledge, but he still kept his hands raised above his head.

Higher and higher Langridge lifted him, and the strain of the effort was only to be guessed by the quick, indrawn breaths which escaped him. Higher . . . and suddenly Dick felt the grip of Achmet's hands upon his wrists.

Rescue, then, was only the matter of a few moments. Three or four of the other Moors joined with Achmet in dragging up the helpless boy; he was bodily raised over the edge and fell forward upon the path, almost exhausted.

But in those same moments something happened which might have been foreseen, but even then scarcely prevented. To Langridge himself at least its inevitability must have been perfectly evident, almost from the first. He had been standing on the narrow ledge just below Dick's dangling feet; beyond that his only support had been his hold upon the boy's shoulders.

That support being removed, the inevitable thing happened. Just as Dick was drawn into safety, Langridge staggered, clutched vainly at the bare rock-face, and fell backwards without a cry.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The dull thud of Langridge's fall brought Dick scrambling to his knees. He leant over the edge of the path, his face white and strained. 'He's fallen—he will be killed,' he panted. 'Oh, Sandy—and he saved my life!'

But Sandy was already seeking for some way to reach the foot of the cliff. Next instant he and Dick were scrambling down, whilst the Moors followed far more leisurely; in their opinion, evidently, Langridge might well have been left to his fate, whether he were alive or dead.

The two boys quickly reached the place where the injured man lay. His eyes were closed and his face twisted with pain, whilst one leg was bent beneath him. But he had fallen upon a piled drift of sand, and this had to some extent broken the force of the concussion.

As Dick knelt beside him Langridge's eyes opened, and he spoke between gasps of pain. 'Don't imagine that I'm killed—not I! Our friend Achmet and the others will have to put—some finishing touches——'

'Oh, don't—don't—' Dick almost sobbed. 'As if we could——'

'*You*—perhaps not! But I don't think you'll find—the Moors—will be so—squeamish—— In the meantime, if you *could* straighten out this leg——'

With Sandy's help, Dick managed to shift Langridge sideways sufficiently to move the broken limb into an easier position. But the pain must have been agonising, and the injured man was unconscious before the operation was finished, and Achmet and his comrades appeared upon the scene.

(*Continued on page* 374.)

AN OLD SCHOOL CUSTOM.

EVERY Good Friday sixty of the youngest boys of the Blue Coat School used formerly to receive each a new penny and a packet of raisins under the will of one Peter Symonds, who lived so long ago as the days of Good Queen Bess. He seems to have had a pretty shrewd knowledge of boys, this kind benefactor, and of the sort of things they would enjoy; perhaps he had a vivid remembrance of school-meals that were not satisfying enough for hungry growing boys.

A schoolboy of much later date, Charles Lamb—whose recollections of Christ's Hospital you are sure to read some day—tells us of 'Monday's milk porritch, blue and tasteless'; of 'pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking'; and of breakfasts that consisted of a 'crug,' or 'quarter of a penny loaf,' 'moistened with attenuated small beer.'

It is quite likely that earlier still in the history of the old school—in the days of Queen Elizabeth—meals were even less luxuriously planned than in Charles Lamb's days, and I can imagine that the first little fellows who benefited under the will of Peter Symonds and received each a penny and a packet of raisins, must have felt themselves very lucky indeed.

I have heard that at first the money was paid to the boys every year over the tomb of their generous friend—to remind them, no doubt, of their benefactor; in later days, however, Liverpool Street Station was erected over the site of the graveyard in which he lay, and this part of the formula had to be dropped.

Ethel Talbot.

THE DELFT JUG.

(*Concluded from page* 342.)

PART II.

BEFORE Kips and Jacob could turn, Jan was speeding like the wind across the parade to the fort, to offer to try his hand at climbing the flagstaff.

His services were accepted gladly, for Colonel Jackson was at his wits' end. But to swarm up a greasy pole is no light task, even for a sailor-lad at home upon the masthead or the roof-top. Three times did Jan come slipping down, covered with grease and mortification. At last a happy thought struck him. 'Cleats and a hammer!' he cried.

They were quickly brought, and at that moment a stout gentleman in velvet and rich lace ruffles shouted, 'A gold jacobus to whoever will set our flag flying aloft!'

Reward did not enter Jan's mind. All he desired was to see Stars and Stripes floating supreme.

Soon he was slowly working his way upward. Knock, knock, one cleat after another was nailed fast, and before sunset the red cross came fluttering down and Stars and Stripes billowed out over St. George to the salute of thirteen guns.

A crowd of men swarmed to praise Jan's deed as he descended the pole. The beruffled gentleman was there with the promised gold piece, but the lad refused it. 'No, no,' said he, all the pride of his Dutch ancestors flaming in the red of his cheeks, 'I cannot take payment for work of that sort, sir.'

'Well, my plucky lad, you've earned it; it's yours if you will, and gladly given,' declared the stranger.

At that moment Jan, looking shyly down, saw the favour upon his breast, and remembered little Katinka. He knitted his brow and shrugged his shoulders. 'I—I will take the money, sir, if you please,' he stammered, red as a young turkey-cock with shame.

'Right, my lad,' came the reply, and with it the coin. 'But don't make yourself ill with all the lollipops and gingerbread it will buy.'

'No fear of that, sir; I don't want it for that,' said Jan, hurrying away, very glad that he had swallowed his pride, though it had been a far harder task than climbing the greasy pole.

Kips was with Jan as he raced across the parade and along Broad Street to an old shop, where only that morning his sharp eyes had espied just such a Delft jug as the one Katinka had broken. Kips' eyes were round with amazement at Jan's purchase of, to him, a stupid blue-and-white jug. He wondered if his chum had taken leave of his senses. But as they raced home Jan explained matters to his friend.

The Van Arsdales' best parlour overflowed with guests, and the Van Arsdales themselves overflowed with pride at their son's exploit, which had already reached their ears. The great dishes of olykoccks, Dutch bloaters, and sweetmeats which Katinka had helped her aunt to set out in preparation for visitors, were being handed round when Jan reached home.

'Hullo!' he shouted, dashing into the kitchen where Katinka sat with the younger children, telling them stories in the firelight, whilst she plied her spinning-wheel. 'Katinka, I say! Here is the twin brother to the broken pitcher, so now run and give it to thy aunt, then get into thy clothes, and—who knows?—we may have a peep at the great General after all!'

'Oh, Cousin Jan! Where did it come from?' cried Katinka, overjoyed with surprise.

'Never mind that now; make haste and give it to thy aunt, or we may be too late.'

Madam Van Arsdale was pleased and gracious enough to accept the new Delft jug, and the tremendous pride she had for Jan would not permit her to refuse him anything.

So off to her room in the roof Katinka tripped, to put on her taffeta gown and big plumed bonnet. Then, hand in hand, she and Jan went hurrying to the city, chattering excitedly of the wonderful events of the day.

They saw the fireworks on Bowling Green, near the ruined statue of King George III.; and how fine and lovely they appeared in the eyes of Katinka, who had known plenty of troublous times but few gay ones. The pavements were thronged with people as they made their way down Broad Street.

'I've heard that the General dines to-night with Governor Clinton and some officers of the army, at Black Sam's tavern,' said Jan, as he guided the girl through the crowd. 'So we will go home that way, and perhaps we shall see him.'

They lingered outside the tavern, which to-night was a blaze of light, while the windows were full of officers in the uniform of the Continental army. Suddenly—'There he is! there he is!' burst from Jan's lips, and he pointed to a group surrounding one imposing central figure, which was certainly no other than the famous leader. Her soul was in Katinka's eyes as she gazed, and the next moment the group in the window seemed to have caught sight of the little pair.

Had the couple been within the lighted room they would have heard Colonel Delavan exclaim, 'Is not that the plucky youngster who outwitted the King's men and raised the Stars and Stripes above St. George this day?'

And very shortly an aide-de-camp was sent to summon the children to a private parlour below.

With feelings of mingled pleasure and fright, Jan and Katinka followed the young officer into General Washington's presence. One glance at the kind, grave countenance reassured Katinka, however, as he asked, 'And who may you be, little lady?'

'I am Katinka Westenfeldt, your Excellency, and this is my cousin, Jan Van Arsdale.'

'You are the lad, so I hear, who climbed the greased pole and set our banner flying where it should have been. My boy, it was well done; and if it be any pleasure to you to hear it, I assure you that George Washington gives you his heartfelt thanks.'

Jan was overcome, he could do naught save bow. But Katinka dropped a pretty little curtsey, saying, 'I am sure, your Excellency, that is the finest reward he could have, and I know he appreciates it.'

This little speech pleased the Commander-in-Chief, and bending low he pressed his lips upon the little maiden's hand, as was the custom of those days. Then, with another bow and curtsey, the children withdrew, hearing Washington exclaim hastily as they went, 'Our American-Dutch boys have ever done brave deeds, but 'tis the daughters of Holland who have the ready tongues.'

'My word,' said Jan, when they stood alone, 'I would not have been without you for five York shillings.'

'Or another gold Jacobus?' laughed Katinka.

How Jan's mother swelled with pride when told of the General's commendation, while his father laughed all

"George Washington gives you his heartfelt thanks."

over his jolly, big moon face, and bade little Johannes and Anna take a pattern by their older brother.

As for Katinka, she had a far happier time after Evacuation Day; and as for the Evacuation Jug, as it was named, that had ever its place of honour on the sideboard, and was given to Katinka on her wedding-day. But to-day a certain New York family display it as their choicest heirloom, and the children delight to hear the story of the blue Holland jug.

CAROLINE L. JOHNSON.

"They raced the last hundred yards neck and neck."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

(Continued from page 356.)

A LITTLE further on Jimmy passed the twin Knoxes, who were seated side by side at the edge of a big dyke, eating biscuits. 'Go it, Henshaw,' said one of them, and the other supplied a variation of the same encouragement by saying, 'Keep it up.'

There were now only three boys ahead of Jimmy; but with half the stretch of marsh and dyke behind him he had already decreased his distance from all of them. He saw the three figures still well ahead of him; but

the two bigger boys without poles were going visibly slower, and Henderson was already close up to them.

He ran on, and presently saw Repington, who had fallen much further back, baulk at a big dyke, run at it again, disappear, and after quite an appreciable interval crawl up on the other side. As he ran on and jumped the smaller dykes immediately in front of him it was plain that even these were a trouble to him. He was, in fact, already done.

He went pluckily at the next big dyke, evidently knowing that he could not clear it, and soused in. Jimmy saw the water splashing above the bank. Then a long time, as it seemed, passed, and Repington did not appear. Jimmy had a very disagreeable feeling about him. The banks were high, and it was not unlikely that he was too exhausted to climb up the further one. In that case Jimmy would have to stop and help him, and his chance would be over. He threw a look round, and there was nobody near who could come to the rescue if he didn't. He resigned himself to his difficult duty, and ran on a little further. But as he neared the dyke he saw, to his immense relief, Repington's head and shoulders appear above the bank. He climbed up to the top of it, and sat there panting as Jimmy swung himself over. He was too much done even to speak, but waved a hand as Jimmy passed him.

Now there were only Weaver and Henderson in front of him. Both of them were considerably nearer than they had been, and Henderson was close up to Weaver, who had failed at the second of the three big dykes, and had scrambled in and out of it, like Repington. But he was still going fairly strong.

There was another group of boys at this second of the extra big dykes, and again Jimmy was cheered, this time not ironically. The third came soon after it. and was near the end of the stretch of marsh. Here there was a great crowd, for it was perhaps the most crucial point of the whole course.

Weaver's pace was now hardly more than a stagger, and Jimmy knew that he had beaten him, whether he got across the dyke or not.

He did get across it, plumping straight into the water with scarcely any attempt at a jump at all, half wading, half swimming across, and scrambling up the other bank, a good deal more than half exhausted.

In the meantime Henderson came up with his pole, running slowly but steadily. Jimmy was catching him up every moment, but he was still a good distance ahead, and after this big dyke there was no other serious obstacle before the end of the course, except the water jump, in which neither of them would have much advantage over the other, as neither of them could expect to jump it.

Henderson put his pole into the water as Weaver was scrambling up the further bank, and took his run. Jimmy, whose eyes were fixed anxiously upon him as he ran between two of the smaller dykes, had an intuition that he had not given himself enough impetus. He took his eyes off him to use his own pole, and when he looked again Henderson had just subsided on to the grass on the nearer side of the dyke. He had missed his swing, and must lose valuable time in taking another one.

He took a much more vigorous one this time, and landed on his hands and knees on the other side, picked himself up, and started running. At this moment Jimmy was just getting ready to swing himself over.

He did it beautifully, and there was immense cheering from the boys on the two banks, and an encouraging wave of the hand from Mr. Cartwright, who had ridden up. He left his pole in the dyke; but started off running instantly, immensely relieved to be without its weight, and feeling that he had more in him by a good deal than he had thought for.

But he would need it all if he was to catch up Henderson. Henderson was a better long-distance runner than he was; there was about a third of a mile to go, and he was already some yards ahead. It would all depend upon which of them had the most left in him.

Henderson and Jimmy both passed Weaver, who was completely done, but struggled on to the end and came in third.

There was a stretch of grass, a jump or a scramble over a fence into a road, another one on the other side, then a grass field, then the water jump, and then the finish a hundred yards further.

Henderson took the two sets of rails rather more neatly than Jimmy, and had slightly increased his lead in the second field. Jimmy had settled on his pace in the dogged way he had, having satisfied himself by practice as to what he could ask of himself. But he knew that if he were to beat Henderson now at this stage he must increase it over the field, and he thought he could safely do so. Anyhow, he must try, and leave the last hundred yards to take care of themselves. He put on a big spurt.

At the water jump he was no more than two paces behind Henderson. Both boys splashed into the water, one after the other, but when they scrambled out again they were level. From this point most of the onlookers at the water jump ran home alongside of them. Whoever won, it would be a great finish.

Henderson had something in him still, but not so much as Jimmy. They raced the last hundred yards neck and neck until just before the end, and then Jimmy put out all his powers and just got in first.

(*Continued on page* 370.)

THE UGLIEST GIRL IN THE SCHOOL.

HER name was Eva Prenton, but nobody ever called her that, except, of course, Miss Winter, our head mistress. At Coniston House, ever since the first day she came, she had been known as Chim—short for Chimpanzee. And the name, unlike many nicknames, was singularly appropriate, for she was undoubtedly the most monkey-faced girl any of us had ever seen. Yet she had a jolly little face for all that, in spite of the snub nose, the beady eyes, and the large mouth. Indeed, Chim was a good-tempered little thing, and did not openly object to her odious and somewhat ill-natured nickname; but although she took it quietly, I strongly suspect that in secret she shed many bitter tears over it.

She was a tiny maiden, almost like a little doll, though with a shapely figure and a wealth of long hair; and she was everybody's friend, being a good-hearted, modest little soul, always ready to lend any one a helping hand, either with their lessons or anything else.

Chim had been a boarder at the school for some years, and her cruel name had stuck to her like a chestnut burr, when suddenly something happened, and it was dropped by general consent.

One glorious half-holiday in springtime a crowd of us

went out into the country near Dunmouth picking primroses, Chim, who was now about fifteen, being one of the party. It was a grand afternoon, bright and sunny, with a feeling of spring in the warm, balmy air.

As we made our way along the cliff path before turning off into the fields, we noticed two men lowering a boy over the cliff at the end of a rope. They were egg-collectors gathering the eggs of the seabirds which abound on the rocky crags near Dunmouth. We watched the proceedings for a few minutes, sincerely pitying the unfortunate boy; but it is a nervy sort of business, and we soon pushed on to the pleasanter pursuit of primrose gathering. Gradually our baskets grew full of the pretty yellow blossoms, and after a very jolly afternoon in the fields, we turned our steps homewards once more. We hurried along, laughing and chattering, as merry and light-hearted a lot of schoolgirls as you would wish to see, and then suddenly we were brought face to face with tragedy.

We had left the fields behind us, and were retracing our steps along the top of the cliffs, when we came across the two men we had seen before, both peering anxiously over the edge, the rope hanging loosely beside them. We ran up to them and soon found out what was amiss.

It appeared that a few minutes before the boy had gone down for his last descent that day. All went well until he had nearly reached the foot of the cliff, where a small strip of sandy beach was left bare by the tide. Then, without any warning, a stone broke away from the rocks above him, and hurtling downwards, struck him on the head. He was immediately rendered unconscious, his hands released their grasp on the rope, and he fell to the beach below. It was only a few feet beneath him; but, of course, it was impossible to tell how badly he was injured from the blow on the head. And now the difficulty was, how to reach him. Neither of his mates could go down to his aid; the thin rope would not bear a man's weight, and a stronger one would have to be fetched from Dunmouth, which would take some considerable time.

'Oh, how dreadful! You must send in at once to Dunmouth and fetch a big rope!' cried Alice Maynard, a senior girl. 'One of us will go. Quick! Tell us where to find help!

'Yes, miss,' replied the elder man, readily, 'my mate was just going to run into Dunmouth Coastguard Station for a rope. But 'tis nearly two mile away, and I doubt whether he will get back in time. You see, it's the tide we're afraid of—'tis coming in fast!'

Then we grasped the situation in all its full horror! Glancing fearfully over the cliff, we could see the rising tide was only a little way from the senseless boy's body. The water would soon reach him, cover his head, and drown him before our eyes. It would take nearly an hour to get help, and it was only a question of minutes. We stood with white faces looking helplessly at one another, and no one knew what to do or say.

Now it was that Chim came to the front, and asserted herself as our superior. She stepped forward with a quick, confident air, and seemed to take charge of matters at once. Chim, the hitherto quiet little person, issued her orders like one born to command, and all that the rest of us—men included—had to do was to obey.

'Cissie! Edith!' she cried. 'Run as fast as you can to the Coastguard Station! Tell them what's happened, and make them bring a strong rope at once. Don't lose an instant!' The two were our best runners, and, glad to be doing something, they went off like the wind.—'You two men, stop here! I shall want you both! I'm going down over the cliff!'

Then there was an outburst of shrill, protesting voices, and we all crowded round her, trying to persuade her not to take such a risk.

But Chim waved us scornfully back. 'Get away, you silly kids!' she cried. 'Can't you see it's the only possible chance? I'm small, so I shall be all right. I'm not afraid... Come on, men. Tie the rope round me, and I'll go down and send up the boy in no time.'

'Well, Miss,' said the old fisherman, admiringly, 'you're a rare plucky one, and no mistake! I know 'tis the only way. Still, I hardly like to let you do it.'

'Come, don't be silly,' she urged, laying her little hand on his arm. 'Do as I say. I'm very light, and there's no other way—so I mean to do it! I want to save that boy's life.'

'And so you shall, God bless you, little maid!' he cried, suddenly making up his mind and patting Chim on the shoulder. 'You're one of the best, sure enough.' And straightway gathering in the rope, he began to make a loop round her with the end.

'Now do be careful, little maid,' he went on, as he finished securing the rope, 'for if anything happens to you, I shall go over the cliff myself!'

'Never fear for me,' she replied, cheerfully. 'All you have got to do is to lower me down—I'm not heavy—and then be ready to pull up again when I give the signal. Now show me how to make the knot.'

This was in order that she might be able to send up the boy in safety. They carefully did what she asked, and then, when everything was ready for the attempt, Chim turned to us, and said quietly, 'Good-bye, girls, I'm going now. I shall be all right. But—in case anything happens—I thought I'd say good-bye. We've had some jolly times together. You've all been very good to me. Good-bye!'

Good to her! And we had called her Chim. We felt conscience-stricken then if we never did before, and we could hardly speak for the lumps in our throats; but every one mumbled some sort of 'Good-bye,' and directly afterwards Chim turned to the men who stood by holding the rope, bracing themselves against a boulder, and said, composedly, 'I'm quite ready.' Then, gripping the rope firmly with both hands, she stepped backwards over the cliff.

The little brown paws, which had so often swarmed up a rope in the 'gym,' held the thin cable firmly, and Chim went down on her errand of mercy as brave and unconcerned as if she had been used to cliff-climbing all her life.

Some of the girls shrank back scared and silent; but a few of us lay down on the grass and looked cautiously over the edge, watching, with our hearts in our mouths, Chim's awful descent. The rope was paid out slowly and steadily, and Chim, a little white spot against the dark, frowning cliff, went gradually down towards the beach. The cliff fell away in a sheer drop at first, and then rocky crags and boulders, and small ledges on which grass and little bushy trees were growing, stuck out at intervals from its face. On reaching these, Chim fended herself off with her hands and feet, dodging them without any difficulty, and in a few short moments she stood on the beach beside the boy.

(*Concluded on page* 382.)

"Two men peering anxiously over the edge."

"Ruth gave Jimmy a loving squeeze in the sight of everybody."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

By Archibald Marshall,

Author of 'Exton Manor,' 'Peter Binney, Undergraduate,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 366.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

JIMMY was a proud and pleased boy when his mother wrote to say that Mr. Spedding was coming to Whyborough for the Sports, and was going to bring her and Ruth with him. The name of Spedding was still so well known at Whyborough that it considerably increased Jimmy's reputation to have it known that he was coming to see him. And one of Jimmy's amiable weaknesses was that his reputation counted for a good deal with him. As he wanted to make himself worthy, however, of any reputation that he might gain at Whyborough, perhaps the weakness may be forgiven him.

And however gratifying it was to have Mr. Spedding coming to see how he was getting on at the end of his first term, it would be still more delightful to have his mother and Ruth there to see him in the place to which he now felt he belonged, and in which he had already gained some modest laurels. He had grown out of that home sickness which attacks young boys, and especially new boys, in their first few weeks at school, but he loved them very dearly, and was proud of them. If the idea that his mother was not quite the same as the mothers of other boys at the school still lingered any where, she would only have to appear before them for it to be entirely dissipated.

They came by the same train as Jimmy had come by on the first day of term, but now it was a beautiful spring evening and quite light when they arrived. As Jimmy waited on the platform with a few other boys, whose 'people' were also coming down, he felt more pleased and light-hearted than he had felt during the whole of the term, more pleased even than when he had won the Lower Steeplechase, and had been cheered in Hall afterwards, and publicly congratulated by Bertram on having done something for the good of the house.

Mr. Spedding got out of the train first, big and handsome and cheery, then little Ruth, who had grown, and was hardly to be called little any longer, at least by boys. She looked very pretty, and gave Jimmy a loving squeeze in the sight of everybody, which he did not object to, as he might perhaps have objected to if she had not been so pretty. Then came his mother, and he thought he had never seen her looking so young and beautiful before. He kept his arm in hers as they went down the platform, and saw by the looks of other boys there what an impression his people were making. Certainly nobody else's could compare with them, and he felt quite sorry for Norman, his old enemy, whose enormous, jewelled, and it must be confessed rather common-looking mother, gave loud-voiced orders to her maid, while the Conqueror stood by and looked unhappy. Jimmy had shown, since his fight with Norman and his subsequent sudden 'licking' at his hands, that he was quite ready to let bygones be bygones; but Norman had not responded. Now their glances met, and Jimmy said as plainly as possible: 'This is the mother you used to talk about before you saw her. 'What do you think of her now?' Norman's eyes dropped.

Jimmy had tea with them at their hotel, and Mr. Spedding came back with him to Stanhope's, and talked to the boys who were in Hall and to others who drifted in as the rumour got about that he was there. Jimmy introduced him, and he said the right word to everybody, especially to Bertram, whom he asked to be allowed to visit in his room. 'Well, I'm glad to see you Head of such a good house,' he said, 'and everybody trying to do something for it.'

'Yes, sir,' said Bertram, modestly. 'That's what I've aimed at.'

Jimmy tried for several events in the Sports, but did not win anything. He had thought he might have had a chance in the School Handicap, which was not infrequently won by a Lower boy who had been given a long start. But Jimmy, having won the Steeple-chase, was no longer a dark horse, and was handicapped rather heavily. He ran well, and so did Henderson, who was also rather heavily handicapped, but neither of them came anywhere near winning. The Handicap was won by Weaver, whose victory was popular, partly because he was a Lower boy and had not been too lightly handicapped, partly because he had run such a plucky race in the Steeplechase.

Jimmy's mother and sister were rather wonderful in the way that they had forgotten nothing he had ever told them in his letters. Ruth, especially, knew all the ways of the school as well as he did, and surprised Henderson and Pilling, whom Jimmy had introduced to them on the first opportunity, by the extent of her knowledge. But it was their remembrance of names that was the most remarkable. They wanted everybody whom Jimmy had ever mentioned by name pointed out to them, and most of them introduced. At first Jimmy was rather shy of going up to boys like Manning and saying his mater and sister would like to be introduced to him. But as he found no unwillingness on the part of anybody, however exalted, he soon got over this feeling. Boys whom he had not been asked to introduce showed some anxiety to undergo the process, and Bertram asked outright for it before his name had been mentioned, and much impressed Mrs. Henshaw by his high ideals as to Stanhope's House.

At last what Jimmy had been dreading came to pass. Mrs. Henshaw said, 'Where is Williams, your fag-master, Jimmy? I know you have left off fagging for him, but he pulled you out of the river, didn't he? I did write to him, you know, but I should like to see him, too.'

It was news to Jimmy that his mother had written to Williams. She had never happened to mention it in her letters. He had written nothing about Williams's bullying of him. Boys keep that sort of thing to themselves, out of shame; and Jimmy had an additional cause of shame with regard to Williams and his mother, which had made him extra careful to let nothing out.

At first Jimmy was inclined to make some excuse, but his mother would have been sure to ask him questions afterwards, if not at the time, so he went to find Williams.

Now Williams had taken scarcely any notice of him since his fight with Norman. He always seemed to be advancing and retiring. But Jimmy had the idea all the same that he looked upon him with a friendly eye, and would not be sorry, if an opportunity came, to show that he had no hostility left. Still, it was was rather a large order to ask him to come and be introduced to his mother and his sister, whom in the

past he had so grossly insulted. If Jimmy had forgiven it, he could hardly be expected to have forgiven himself. Jimmy did not quite understand this, but it was at the bottom of his disinclination to approach Williams.

He found him on the other side of the field, alone for the moment, and gave his invitation: 'I say, Williams, my mater would like to be introduced to you.'

Williams turned as hot as fire. 'All right!' he said, shortly, and walked with Jimmy towards where Mrs. Henshaw and Ruth were sitting.

'I didn't know my mater had written to you,' Jimmy said, by way of breaking the rather uncomfortable silence.

'Yes,' said Williams, and then added: 'I didn't answer it.'

By the way this was said, Jimmy understood it to mean that Williams had not written because of what had happened before. 'Of course I didn't tell her anything about—about all that,' he said.

Williams looked at him quickly. 'Thanks, Henshaw,' he said.

(*Concluded on page* 381.)

THE LEGEND OF A SPRING.

CLOSE to the village of Stoke, near Newark, in Northamptonshire, there is a spring called the 'Willow Rundle,' of which an interesting legend is told.

Pipes carry the water from the hilly field in which the spring rises to a trough placed by the roadside, where it refreshes many weary, thirsty horses and cattle. Tired children, on warm summer days, stoop to drink from the spring, catching the water before it falls into the trough. Grown-up people use it also, and bring buckets in which to take some back with them to their homes, for they think the 'Rundle' water better than any other.

And now for the legend.

In 1487, when, during the reign of Henry the Seventh, England was suffering the miseries of civil war, a great battle—in which Lambert Simnel was defeated—was fought at Stoke. On the hill just outside the little village lay a dying soldier, who was longing, as the wounded so often do long, for water. A comrade gave him a drink from his bottle. Then the dying man said that if he went to Paradise there should rise on the spot where he now lay a spring of water which should never run dry.

More than four centuries have passed since that day of battle at Stoke, and the pretty legend lives still. The water lives, too, and it is a fact that the 'Willow Rundle' has never frozen in the hardest winter or dried up in the hottest summer. So, at any rate, say the oldest inhabitants of the place. Like Tennyson's brook, the Stoke 'Rundle' might say or sing:

'For men may come and men may go,
But I go on for ever.'

E. DYKE.

DOGS SLIDING.

CÆSAR and Patrick, and Pompey and Rover,
Went off to the Common one very cold day,
But their favourite pond was all frozen over—
The water to swim in was hidden away!

Then the four of them stopped on the bank, and stood gazing
At little dogs walking upon the lake!
The water was hard! It was very amazing,
But soon they discovered what fun it would make;

For the people around began throwing branches
Out on the ice; and, off for a game,
Patrick and Pompey slipped down on their haunches,
And big dogs and little dogs all did the same.

But they soon got on better; and, oh! there was laughter
To see all the doggies go learning to slide,
Racing to fetch the sticks they went after,
Then straightening their legs for a glorious glide.

GERALD BULL.

A JOURNEY TO GO.

V.—LONDON TO DOVER.

PART II.

THERE are several routes by which Dover may be reached from Canterbury, the first and most direct being, of course, by Bekesbourne and Adisham, a journey that takes little more than an hour. Then there is the way by Lyminge and Folkestone; the line through Minster; or, if we do not mind slow trains and changes, we can travel by Whitstable, and along the north and north-eastern coasts of Kent.

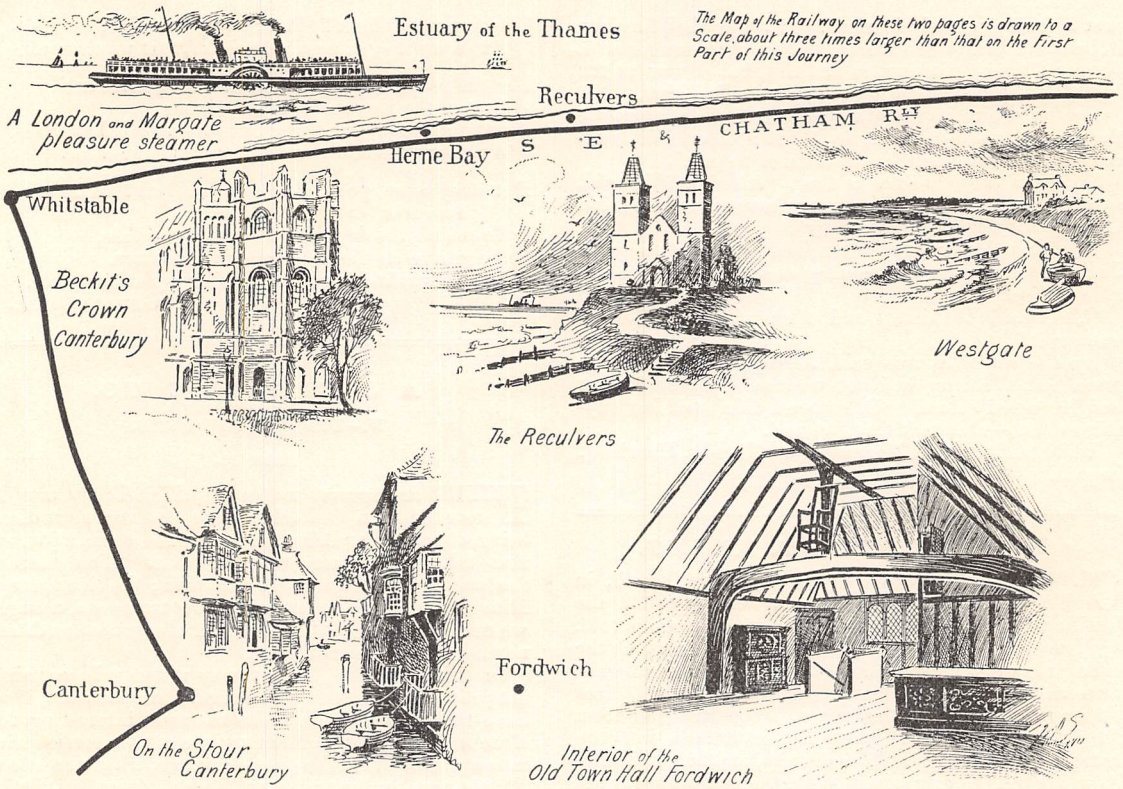
In this case the longest way round will certainly not prove the shortest way to our destination; but, if we have time to spare, it will be the most interesting, for, if we know anything of history, we can be carried back in imagination into the days, long ago, when the Isle of Thanet was really an island, divided from Britain by the broad channel of the Wantsum, when the drowned city of Regulbium stretched away northward below the Reculver cliffs, and when the sea washed against the flint walls of Richborough Castle.

From Canterbury to Dover—by Herne Bay, Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs—it seems a commonplace trip enough, but the little journey gains a new romance and interest if we say instead that we are travelling viâ Regulbium (the Roman fortress and watch-tower), Rutupiæ (the headquarters of the second legion), and Deal (the 'flat and open coast,' where the armies of Julius Cæsar landed nearly two thousand years ago).

We begin our journey by going nearly due north to Whitstable, a place noted for its oyster fisheries, and then turn westward to Herne Bay. Here we catch our first glimpse—and a homely one it is—into Roman times, for out in the bay is a rock called the Pudding Pan, and there, long ago, a galley was wrecked with a cargo of household pottery on board. Even now fishermen often find fragments of ancient red (Saurian) earthenware in their nets.

A little way beyond Herne we come to Reculver, or Regulbium, the castle which once guarded the entrance of the strait separating Thanet from the mainland. This channel was then three furlongs wide, and afforded safe anchorage for the Roman fleets. The fortress was some distance from the coast, but in this part of Kent the sea has slowly but steadily encroached so, that now it washes against the cliff on which the ruins stand, and the once-important town has been entirely submerged.

After the Roman retreat from Britain, Reculver



was occupied by the Saxons, and there King Egbert built an abbey as an atonement for the murder of his two nephews.

Apparently the king's repentance was deep and sincere, for we are told that he sent messengers to Domneva, the sister of his victims, to offer reparation and to beg for forgiveness. Domneva demanded land on which a convent might be built, and Egbert agreed to give her as much land at Minster as a hind could run over at one course. The trial was made, and the swift and tireless animal won nearly ten thousand acres for the princess. Here the nunnery was built, and it flourished until 1101, when it was destroyed and its inmates massacred by the Danes.

The Isle of Thanet is the name still given to the district west of the little river Stour, and in old times it seems to have been considered a very favoured locality, for writers speak of its being more fertile than any other part of England—if not of the whole world; and they declare that it was entirely free from rats and snakes.

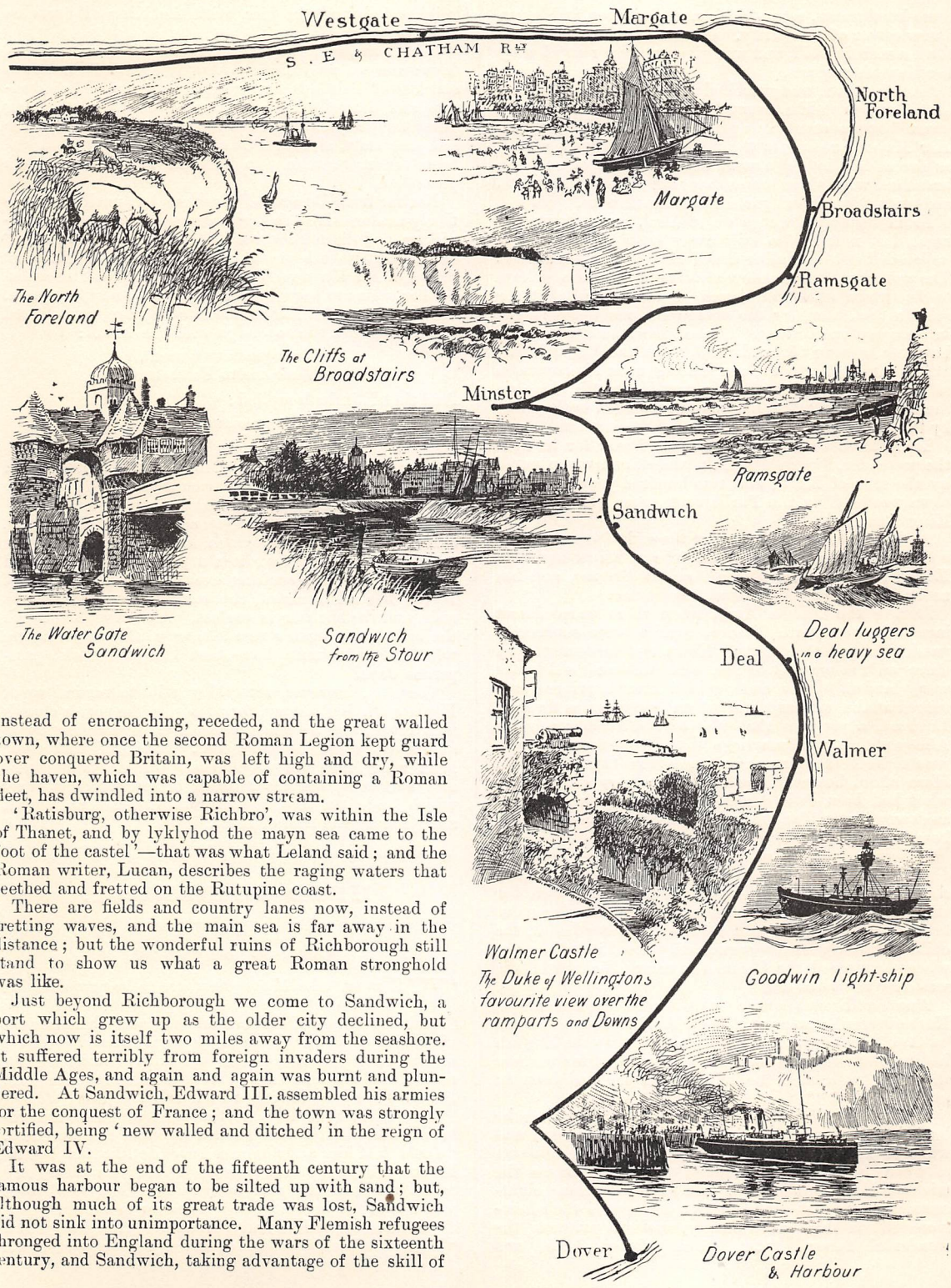
St. Augustine with his band of missionary priests landed on the island, and was there received by the Saxon king, Ethelbert, who, having a Christian wife, was ready to welcome the new comer and the new religion. He came to Thanet from his palace at Reculver, and the meeting took place in the open air, under an oak tree, for, although friendly, the king was suspicious, and, as the Venerable Bede says, 'he had taken precautions that they should not come to him in any house, lest if they practised magical arts they might impose upon him.'

According to old legends, these fears seem to have been well founded; for we are told that the rock on which St. Augustine first trod on landing ever afterwards bore his footprint, and that if it was moved from its original place it could fly back there. A little chapel was built over this miraculous stone, pilgrims visited it, and it was still to be seen at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Margate and Ramsgate, the two chief towns on Thanet, are modern places, which were hardly known until the eighteenth century, although there was at Ramsgate 'a smaul peere for shyppeis' before that time. Between Ramsgate and Margate is the North Foreland, the most easterly point in Kent, and off this cape, on the fourth of June, 1666, was fought a great sea battle between an English fleet and the Dutch under Admiral de Ruyter. From the same cliffs, nearly eighty years earlier, the Kentish folk had witnessed another and more glorious fight—when the Spanish Armada was chased up the Channel by Drake, Frobisher, and Effingham.

Leaving Ramsgate and passing through Minster, where Domneva built her convent and where her daughter, Mildred, was venerated as a saint, we come to Richborough, the ruined fortress which once protected the southern entrance of the Wantsum, and which was known in ancient times as Rutupiæ Portus.

Formerly this place was one of the principal towns in Britain, and until the seventh century it remained an important harbour. Gradually, however, the sea which had destroyed the sister city, Regulbium, ruined Rutupiæ as well, although in a different way; for here the water,



instead of encroaching, receded, and the great walled town, where once the second Roman Legion kept guard over conquered Britain, was left high and dry, while the haven, which was capable of containing a Roman fleet, has dwindled into a narrow stream.

'Ratisburg, otherwise Richbro', was within the Isle of Thanet, and by lyklyhod the mayn sea came to the foot of the castel'—that was what Leland said; and the Roman writer, Lucan, describes the raging waters that seethed and fretted on the Rutupine coast.

There are fields and country lanes now, instead of fretting waves, and the main sea is far away in the distance; but the wonderful ruins of Richborough still stand to show us what a great Roman stronghold was like.

Just beyond Richborough we come to Sandwich, a port which grew up as the older city declined, but which now is itself two miles away from the seashore. It suffered terribly from foreign invaders during the Middle Ages, and again and again was burnt and plundered. At Sandwich, Edward III. assembled his armies for the conquest of France; and the town was strongly fortified, being 'new walled and ditched' in the reign of Edward IV.

It was at the end of the fifteenth century that the famous harbour began to be silted up with sand; but, although much of its great trade was lost, Sandwich did not sink into unimportance. Many Flemish refugees thronged into England during the wars of the sixteenth century, and Sandwich, taking advantage of the skill of

these immigrants, set up cloth manufactories, and began a new career of prosperity. Queen Elizabeth paid the town a visit in 1571, and was given a great reception by her Kentish subjects.

'All the town was gravelled and strewed with rushes, herbs, and such-like, every house having a number of green boughs standing against the doors and walls. Her Majestie rode into the town; and in divers places, as far as her lodgings, were divers cords made of vine branches, with their leaves, hanging across the streets, and upon them divers garlands of fine flowers.'

From Sandwich we go on to Deal, formerly on the coast, but now half a mile away from the sea. It is believed that here Julius Cæsar landed with his armies. The water was too shallow to allow the Roman galleys to be drawn up on the beech, and it is said that the soldiers hesitated, for the savage Britons were arrayed in force to meet them. One of the standard-bearers, however, sprang forward, and, with the Eagle in his hands, plunged into the sea, calling upon his comrades to follow him. There was a terrible battle there on the flat shore, but the Britons were beaten back at last by the superior skill and weapons of the invaders.

There have been other battles at Deal: for in 1495 the pretender, Perkin Warbeck, landed, and was opposed by the men of Kent; and two hundred years later the town was held by the Parliament against the forces of King Charles I.

And now we are getting near the end of our journey, and come to Dover, which was the principal haven in England at the time of the Ancient Britons, and has never lost its prosperity and importance.

During the Middle Ages, when there were almost incessant wars with France, armies were constantly passing through the town. Kings and leaders stopped there on the way to or fro, and prisoners and booty were landed. Now and again a French princess appeared at the port and started on her progress through England, a progress that was to end at Westminster Abbey with a royal marriage that, it was fondly hoped, would heal the breach between the two countries. More often, however, the result was very different to what had been desired, and the rich provinces brought as dowry by the daughters of France only became new bones of contention.

However, in spite of their consequences, those mediæval wedding processions must have been brave shows, for hither came Eleanor of Provence, with her three hundred attendant ladies; Isobel, the beautiful bride of Edward II.; and, later on, another Isobel, the child princess, who was surnamed 'The Little,' because when she crossed the Channel to marry Richard II. she was only ten years old.

Another French queen who landed at Dover was Katherine, who married Henry V., six years after the battle of Agincourt; and it is evident that the English had no bitter feelings for their former foes, for we hear that they welcomed the bride 'as if she had been an angel.'

Henry himself had had a great reception when he landed on his homeward journey after the victory; and we hear that all the way to London the inhabitants of towns and villages crowded the roads to see the triumphal pageant go by. Later, those same sight-seers thronged out again to pay homage to their hero-monarch on his last journey, and to witness the wonderful funeral train, when princes, lords, and knights followed the bier, with the King of Scots as chief mourner.

For a time, in the sixteenth century, Dover saw evil days; and we read that, 'What by decay of the haven and loss of Calais, it was brought to a miserable nakedness and decay.' This, however, was only a passing phase, for the position of the town insured it importance and prosperity, although Calais was no longer, as it had been for more than two hundred years, an English possession.

Not far from Dover is Folkestone, but until comparatively modern times this place remained a mere fishing-village, and did not share the fame of its sister town.

Queen Elizabeth visited Folkestone, as she did most places in her kingdom, but the entertainment provided for her seems to have been very simple and inadequate. It is said that the Mayor, mounted upon a three-legged stool, welcomed the sovereign with the words:

'Most gracious Queen,
Welcome to Folkesteen.'

And that Elizabeth replied:

'Most gracious Fool,
Get off that stool.'

Now Folkestone is a busy, important place, the rival of its neighbour, Dover, and from it steamers run every day to the French town of Boulogne opposite.

Not far away from Folkestone is quaint old Hythe, one of the Cinque ports, which in the Middle Ages was a thriving seaside town, often attacked by enemies, and the scene of many exciting events. Now the glory of Hythe has all departed, the sea has receded nearly a mile, and the harbour is useless. As we walk through the long, quiet main street it is very difficult to picture what the town must have been like in the old, prosperous days.

There is, however, something still to remind us of Hythe's stirring history, for adjoining the parish church is a crypt, and here is preserved a large collection of skulls and other human bones. It is said that these grim relics, many of which show the marks of sword and battleaxe, are the remains of an invading army which landed on the coast, and was defeated with great slaughter by the men of Kent.

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 362.)

'WE must take him somewhere to be nursed,' Dick said.

Achmet shrugged his shoulders, and there was a vindictive light in his dark eyes. 'It would be easier and wiser to put an end here and now,' he said significantly, and one or two of the Moors nodded in agreement, fingering the long knives in their belts.

But Dick, regardless of the odds in numbers, protested vehemently, with flushed face and clenched fists. 'You'd *kill* him after he saved my life like that!—and he could have got away *easily* before you came, and taken the treasure and everything. Why—why—it was one of the bravest things I've ever heard of!'

'It was a brave deed truly,' Achmet agreed grudgingly. 'Yet remember how he has deceived you—how he would

have robbed you of the treasure which may save your father's life. Remember that he is a traitor every way——'

'I don't care!' Dick persisted doggedly. 'He won't be able to take the treasure now—he won't be able to do any more harm to us—and—and anyway, you shan't kill him.'

Again Achmet shrugged his shoulders, glancing down at the unconscious Langridge. 'It shall be as you say,' he answered reluctantly. 'Although it would be far safer to make an end . . .'

'Where can we take him?' Dick persisted, disregarding the argument, now that he had gained his point.

'If we carried him to the camp of the Lord Mulai, he would undoubtedly be shot; if he fell into the hands of Abdul's men, his life would be worth no more . . . There is the French Hospital at Casablanca—that is near at hand, and there they would receive him.'

'Oh, that's a splendid idea!' Dick said, with satisfaction. 'And when he's once safe there, you'll come with us, Achmet, to find the treasure, and see about getting father set free.'

Achmet agreed with a sudden, unexpected flash of white teeth in his grave, dark face; the Moor's devotion to Captain Harland was one of the strongest things in his nature.

'And if there's heaps and heaps, perhaps we ought to give some to Mulai Hafid; because it was sort of promised to him,' Sandy remarked.

But Achmet seemed to consider that this would be unnecessary.

The journey to Casablanca, with Langridge carried in a litter swung between two horses, was uneventful and successful enough. It was in the cool, whitewashed ward of the French Hospital that Dick and Sandy next day had their last interview with the man who had been the cause and the companion of some of their wildest adventures.

Langridge looked white and haggard enough, but he was perfectly conscious, and a little smile at sight of the boys crossed his pain-twisted face. 'I have to thank you for finding myself here, I think,' he said. 'I am quite sure that Achmet's idea would have been to dispose of me in a much more summary fashion.'

Dick flushed and stammered. 'Oh, of course, we couldn't—it's nothing——' he said, awkwardly.

'It was very good of you, boy,' the other answered, quietly.

'It was good of you to save me, and—and—by the way, why did you do it?'

'Why—oh, I don't know! Always found you a decent kid—seen a good deal of you the last few days—and, as it was my fault, I couldn't very well let you be killed.' Langridge spoke disjointedly.

'You'd have got away if you had, though, with the treasure too, perhaps——' Dick began.

'The treasure, eh? That reminds me. You have the paper, and I suppose you'll be off after it soon.'

'To-morrow,' Dick answered.

'Well—I wish you success! although it's very unselfish of me. You'll never know what a temptation the idea of the treasure was to a fellow like me.'

Sandy, perched upon the edge of the bed, suddenly broke in with an eager question. 'I say—do you mind telling us—we don't understand—we can't think how—how you did it all.'

Langridge flushed and smiled a little awkwardly. 'Rather like asking a burglar to give away trade secrets, isn't it? But I'll tell you anything you want to know. I don't care; I've no shame.'

'How did you know about the book?'

'The book—oh, there wasn't much difficulty there. You see, I had my eye on the treasure from the first moment that you told me of it. So when I left you on the beach at Mogador, I went to visit Levi—bargained with him for that book of yours in exchange for information about you, and, in the end—got it!'

'I *see!*' Dick whistled.

'Simple enough, eh?'

'Yes, I suppose it was.'

'Then I fitted up my expedition of one, and set out for the pit, only to find you there before me. A nasty shock that was! So I had to make the best of things—and would have, if we hadn't been captured by Mulai's men.'

'But then . . . why did you pretend to be our Father?'

'Well, surely that's pretty obvious. It was the only way I could think of to make you give up the money to me—and remember it was a matter of life and death just then.'

'It was frightfully clever—all of it,' Dick said, slowly.

'Oh, I *am* clever!' Langridge turned uneasily on his pillow, and smiled wryly. 'It's what has brought me to this. Haven't got much good by it, though, and that's a fact.'

The nursing sister at the other end of the ward glanced at the boys warningly, and Dick rose to go. But he still hesitated, flushing, and then broke out impulsively: 'I say, don't think it's cheek . . . but . . . what are you going to do . . . when you're well, I mean?'

'Do you care?' Langridge asked, slowly.

'Yes, we do—really we do—don't we, Sandy?'

'Of *course!*' Sandy asseverated emphatically.

'You funny kids! You've got precious little reason for any tender feeling towards me, if you come to that.'

'Oh, I don't know . . . that's all right . . . anyway, *I've* plenty of reason,' Dick declared.

'Well, I'll tell you, if you really want to know, I thought of enlisting in the Foreign Legion. I was by way of being a soldier once—an officer in the British army, though you scarcely believe it . . . no matter why I had to leave; it wasn't much to my credit. But, anyway, in the Legion I shall stand a chance of some fighting—and it'll be a straighter life than I've gone in for lately.'

'I'm glad of that,' Dick said, soberly.

'Of what?' There was a sudden twinkle in the grey eyes.

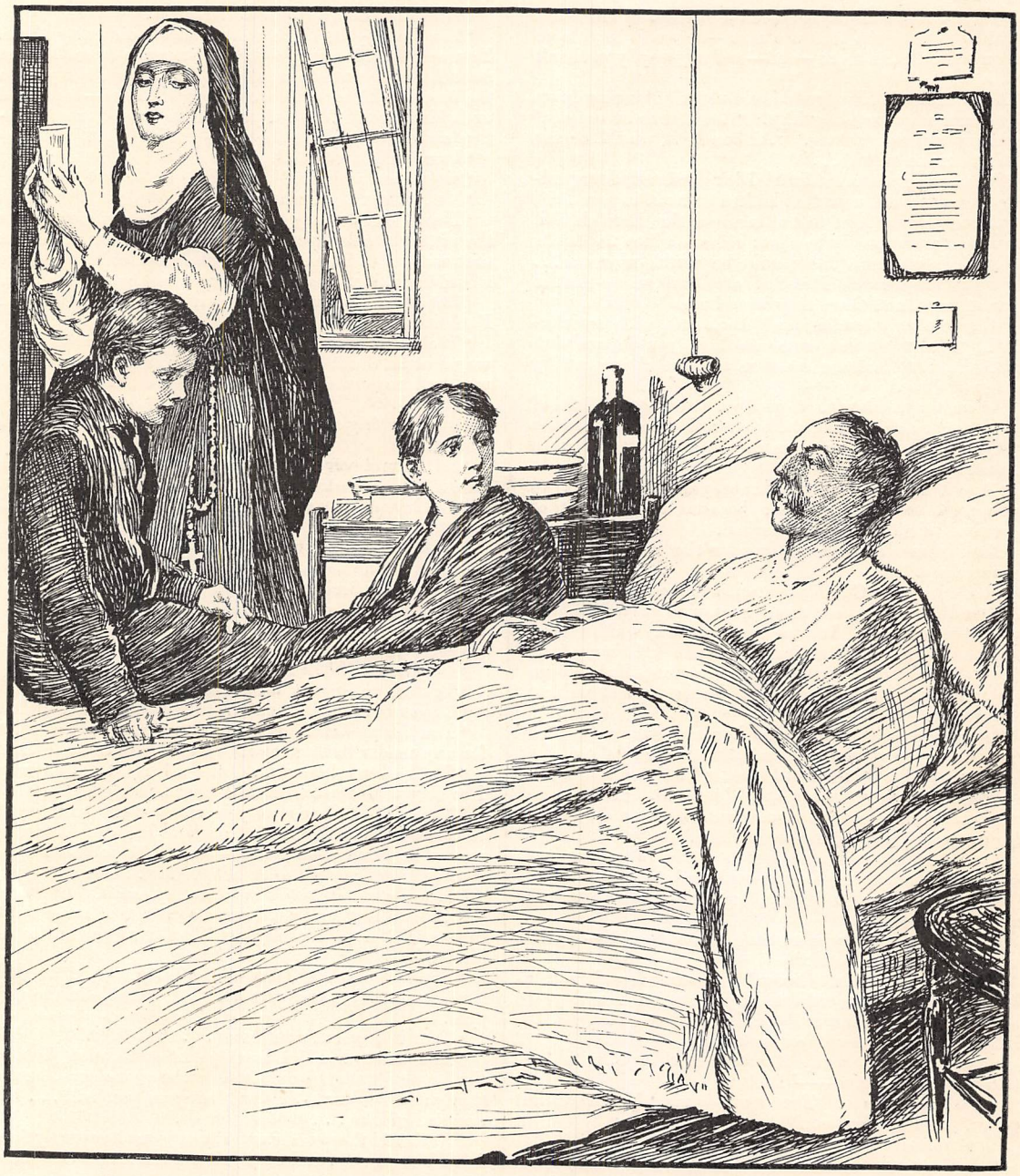
'That it'll be . . . you know . . . straighter.'

'You funny kid!' Langridge repeated, and then, as the boys still stood beside his seat, he spoke again hesitatingly: 'I wonder . . . I don't suppose you will . . . but do you feel like . . . shaking hands.'

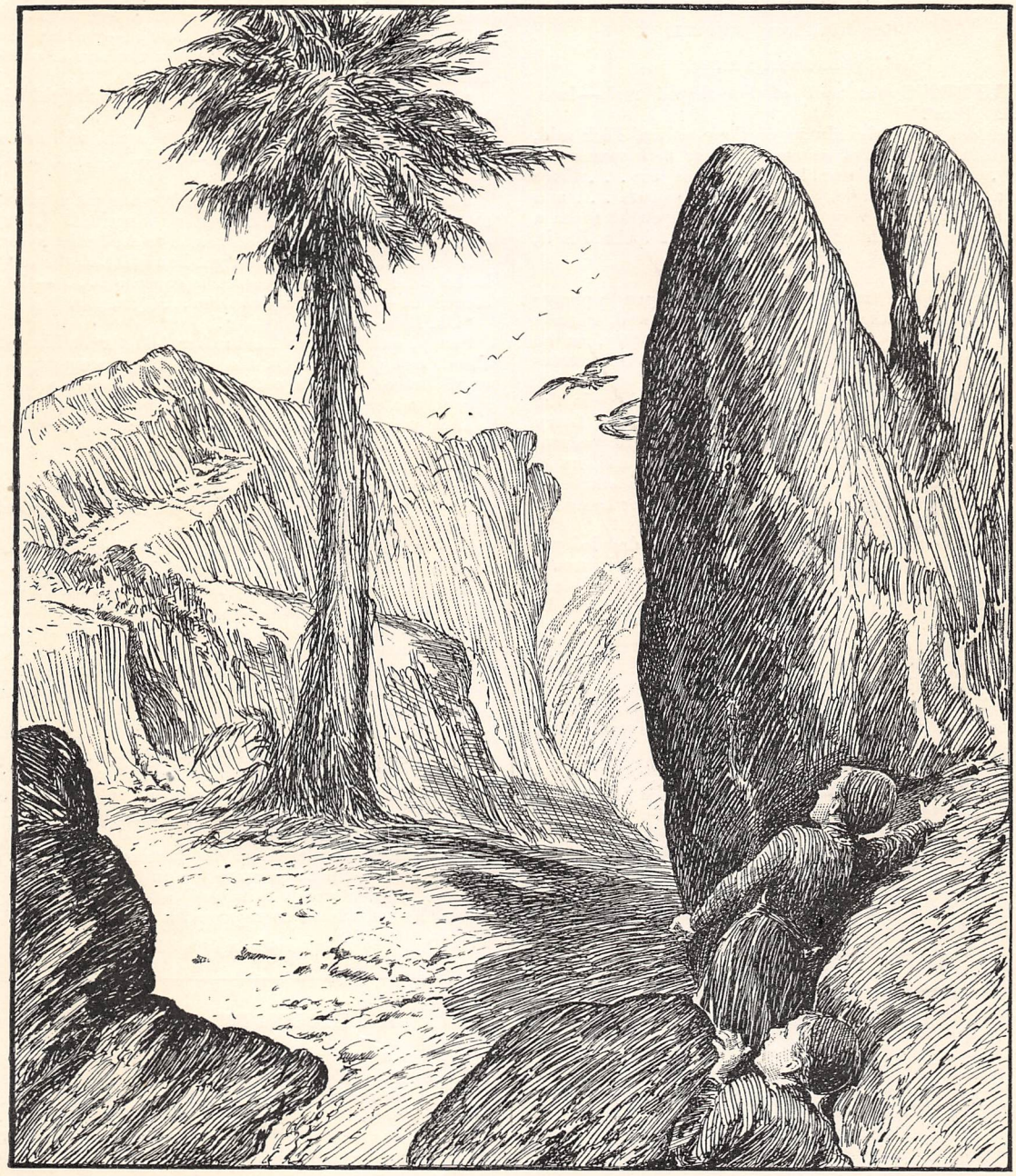
'Rather!' the word came almost simultaneously from Dick and Sandy, and they gripped the man's thin, bony hand in turn.

'I hope you'll find the treasure,' Langridge said. 'And I hope you'll find your father—your real father.' He paused, and then added in a lower voice: 'All I can say is that . . . I envy him; he's a lucky man to have you two boys.'

(*Continued on page* 378.)



"The nursing-sister glanced at the boys warningly."



"'The solitary palm-tree—that's it, Sandy!'"

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 375.)

CHAPTER XIX.

'THERE'S the sort of lion-shaped rock—look, Dick!'

'I don't see the clump of three palms,' Dick said, doubtfully. 'But of course they may be blown down, or . . . no, my word! There they are . . . three in a sort of triangle, just like the picture . . . and then, just a little way further on, there ought to be a rock like a tooth sticking up . . . that looks like it, and . . .

'Oh, let's get down and run, Dick!'

Sandy slipped from his donkey and began to plunge wildly through the sand, whilst Dick followed, scarcely less impetuously, and Achmet smiled faintly, as he reined in his horse and watched the boys' flushed faces and excited gestures.

A week had passed since they left Langridge in the Casablanca Hospital, a week of preparation and flurry and haste, of hope and foreboding and anticipation. Achmet had brought two of the Moorish soldiers as an escort, and they took with them a also a couple of pack donkeys to carry the treasure—if it ever became a concrete fact.

But the nearer the boys came to the dreaded yet longed-for moment, the more they feared. It would most likely be impossible to discover the hiding-place of the treasure; success seemed a thing too good to be true.

Yet they set to work bravely and perseveringly, following the trail by day, and by night talking round their camp fire. It was thus that Sandy and Achmet heard the full story of Dick's adventures. 'I went to sleep that night watching the sentry,' he told them. 'And then the next thing I seem to remember was a hand touching my wrist softly . . . I partly woke up, but before I had time to speak I heard a voice whispering, and telling me not to make a sound. "I'm your father," he said; "follow me . . ." So, of course, I didn't say anything; I just crawled after him into the dark, and found him crouching behind some rocks. So then he told me—oh, you know it all!—about how Achmet was a traitor and everything. Well, of course, I believed it—I couldn't help it. I wanted to go back for Sandy at once, but he said it wasn't safe—we must wait for a better opportunity. So then we went to that place where you found us up amongst the rocks—and that's really all that happened. But he was really awfully decent to me. D'you know, I believe he likes us rather. And, anyhow, he saved my life.'

With which conclusion Dick usually persuaded himself and Sandy to entirely overlook and forget Langridge's manifold misdoings.

With all its anxiety, it had been a most fascinating game, this working out from the scrap of paper copied from the stone, the clues, bearings, and landmarks given by the long-dead sailor.

And now, the unexpected yet longed-for thing had come to pass. Almost literally breathless with excitement the two boys found themselves really in sight of the queer, unmistakable double-pointed rock which Jesmond gave as his principal landmark.

There it was, exactly as he had drawn it in the crudely-scratched sketch upon the stone in the pit.

Dick pored over the scrap of paper, whilst Sandy peered over his shoulder. "One hundred paces from the solitary palm-tree" . . . that's it, Sandy!—"where the shadow of the double rock falls when the sun is overhead."'

'It's just about overhead now!' Sandy nudged his brother, gleefully.

'What comes next—oh, yes—"there you will find a cleft, wide and shallow"—yes—and—oh, look, look, Sandy—there it is!'

They pelted over the sand towards the place where the wide, shallow cleft showed as described. Then, once more, Dick came to a standstill to study the paper. 'Listen, Sandy—"upon the right-hand face of the cleft is the place where the treasure is concealed . . ."—then it must be—yes—just about there . . . d'you see?'

'Oh, Dick—Dick—it's gone!'

Sandy, quicker than his brother, had thrust himself ahead, and pushed aside the curtaining creepers; the words broke from him, cutting in upon the elder boy's speech, in a cry of rage and fierce disappointment.

Dick was at his side in a moment, staring over his shoulder. But the terrible and unexpected thing was true; there was not the faintest shadow of doubt.

The creepers and bushes had been roughly torn away from the face of the cliff, showing the bare rock, stained and discoloured with mud and water.

Straight across the rock face a crack gaped like an open wound. Plainly the cement which Jesmond mentioned had been broken away from the cleft with some sharp tool, for fragments still clung to the rock here and there, and the ground at their feet was covered with scattered chips and lumps.

And, plainly too, all this had been done but a very few hours before, since the plants dragged up by the roots were still green and unwithered.

Sandy was the first to find words to express their disappointment, but they came all confused with a sudden burst of tears. The boy sank down upon the sand and buried his face on his arms, sobbing heartbrokenly. 'It's all gone—all gone. And now—now—we can't possibly save Father . . .'

Dick pretended to examine the interior of the empty hiding-place, but his eyes were too full of tears to see plainly. And it was quite impossible to speak just then, even if he had wished to reprove his brother for childishness.

(*Continued on page* 386.)

A PRISONER'S ESCAPE.

HE was not a 'prisoner of war,' British or otherwise. He was only a poor field mouse who had somehow tumbled into a hole which had been dug to hold a telegraph pole.

Great was the intelligence shown by this small creature, and equally great was his perseverance. At first he ran round and round his prison for an hour or so, but he found no means of escape that way. Then, as if the thought had just 'struck' him, this scientific mouse set himself steadily to dig a spiral groove around the hole's inner surface. Up and up it went, like a spiral staircase. Night and day worked the mouse, and as he got further away from the bottom of the hole he dug out

here and there little pockets in which he could rest when he felt tired.

He had not only rest, but also food to sustain him, for the telegraph workers, who were very much interested in his performance, kept him well supplied. All went well for two weeks, and then the brave little engineer came to a rock. But perseverance, as we have so often been told, 'conquers all things,' and the mouse, after spending the greater part of a day in trying—unsuccessfully—to get around, under, or over the rock which blocked his way, reversed the spiral, and patiently began tunnelling *in the opposite direction*. In another fortnight he had reached the top and was free. What a happy little field mouse then was he! E. Dyke.

HOW THINGS GROW.

A LITTLE sun, a little rain,
A little wind to blow,
A little grass upon the plain,
And so the flowers grow.

A little Violet, white or blue,
That opens in the morn,
And in the lane comes peeping thro',
And so is beauty born.

A little deed of kindness done,
Some word that's softly said,
A smile given to some little one,
'Tis so that grace is fed.

A cup of water cold and clear,
Given to one athirst,
Brings thoughts and feelings kind and dear—
'Tis so that love is nursed.

Frank Ellis.

OUR RAG.

PERKS and I had been at school from the first day of the holidays until the last, and we felt we couldn't bear it any more. Four weeks of loneliness had been just as much as we could stand, and when Perks on the last morning said that, whatever *I* felt about it, he wouldn't be sorry when term began again, I felt much the same as he did.

'Well, to-morrow we'll have them back, old fellow,' I said, slapping him on the back to cheer him. 'The Doctor, and the Masters, and every one else——'

'Not forgetting the new boys,' said Perks. 'Don't forget those.' He grinned at the fun there was ahead, for some fellows will take a lot of ragging. 'Looks like one coming along now,' he continued, as we both hung out of the study window.

And, sure enough, the queerest-looking chap was walking up the drive. Perks and I are both thirteen, and I've heard the Sergeant say that Perks might easily be taken for a fifteen-year-old; but the new-comer didn't look a month more than twelve, and he wore big glasses.

'Suppose he's come to show himself, or something,' Perks was beginning, when suddenly he cut himself short. 'I say——!' he said.

'What's up?' I asked. Perks' wits are quicker than mine, and I stared when I saw him fly to the cupboard where the Doctor had left his cap and gown and begin to put them on. 'What are you after?'

'Make yourself useful,' said Perks, 'and go and ask what that chap wants before the maids see him. And if he's new, then——'

'Well, what?' I said, half beginning to understand.

'Then bring him straight to my presence,' said Perks, seating himself, and speaking exactly in the Doctor's tones.

I half exploded with laughter, but I went to the front door, and there was the little chap. 'I beg your pardon,' he said very politely, 'but I wish to see Doctor Mack.'

'This way,' I said, speaking as well as I could. 'New boy?'

'Well——!' the little chap was beginning, but I cut him short. 'This way,' I said in a loud voice, and ushered him before Perks, who mopped his face and peered through his glasses, for all the world like the Doctor himself.

'Ah, me!' he said in a hoarse tone. 'Another young friend to be admitted to my seminary? Delighted to make your acquaintance, and may you be a credit to Oakley Hall, the home of learning, and——' He stopped then, because he couldn't think how to end his sentence, and put out his hand to grasp the new boy's. I noticed that the little chap seemed a bit amazed, but he didn't appear to consider Perks was doing anything extraordinary in the head-master line; only took a step forward and grasped his hand, and then shuffled about and looked a bit confused.

'Sit down,' said Perks, waving him to a desk. 'Hodges, you may go.' This was to me because I couldn't help giggling, and I expect he thought we'd put each other out. I retired—not too far, you may be sure—and the fun went on.

'I must test your mental capacity,' said Perks very gravely. 'How long would it take you to find a needle in a bundle of hay?'

'Well,' said the little chap; he looked rather surprised; 'I——'

'Ah!' said Perks. He shook his head and made a big cross on a piece of paper on the desk. 'To proceed: add together mentally the number of apples in a barrel to the number of pears in——'

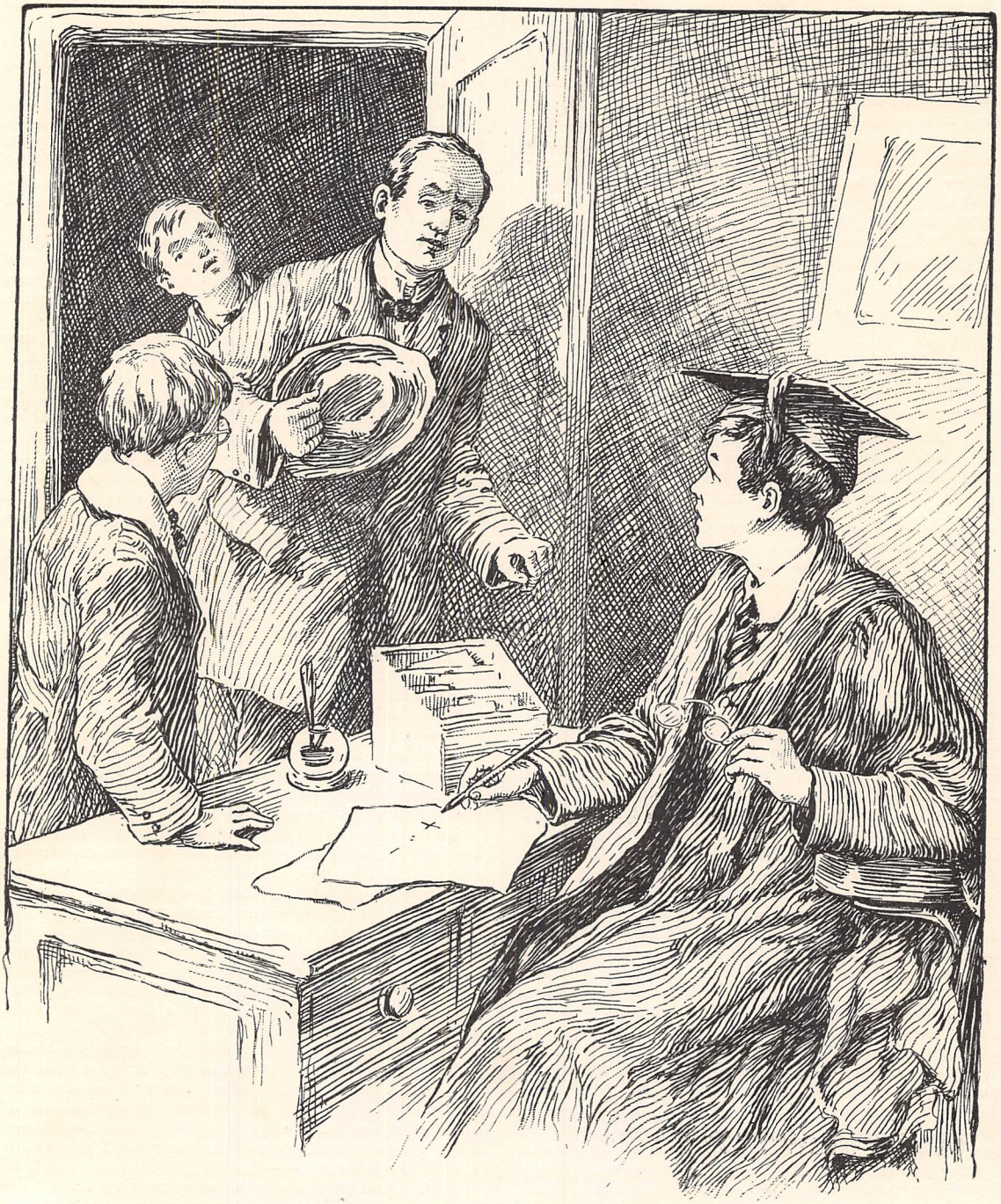
And then suddenly the most awful change came over his face. Up the drive outside the window came quick steps. The Doctor—the Doctor himself—came striding in right through the hall door, along the passage, and—into the study before we could move.

'Either of you two seen my nephew, young Elliot?' he asked. 'He is to join school to-morrow,' and was to have come up by my train to-day, but——' He broke off and stared, taking the situation in pretty well at a glance. 'What does this mean?' he asked, glaring at Perks.

I began to explain, of course, that *I* was to blame, and Perks was trying to prove that *he* was, and the Doctor was looking pretty stern, when all of a sudden the little chap spoke up. 'If there's any blame, Uncle,' says he, 'it's mine. I might have told them that I knew all the time what they were up to; but I thought it would be such a rag——!'

Rag! And we thought we were ragging *him!* We felt pretty small, I can tell you, to be taken in by a new little chap who wasn't even in his first year.

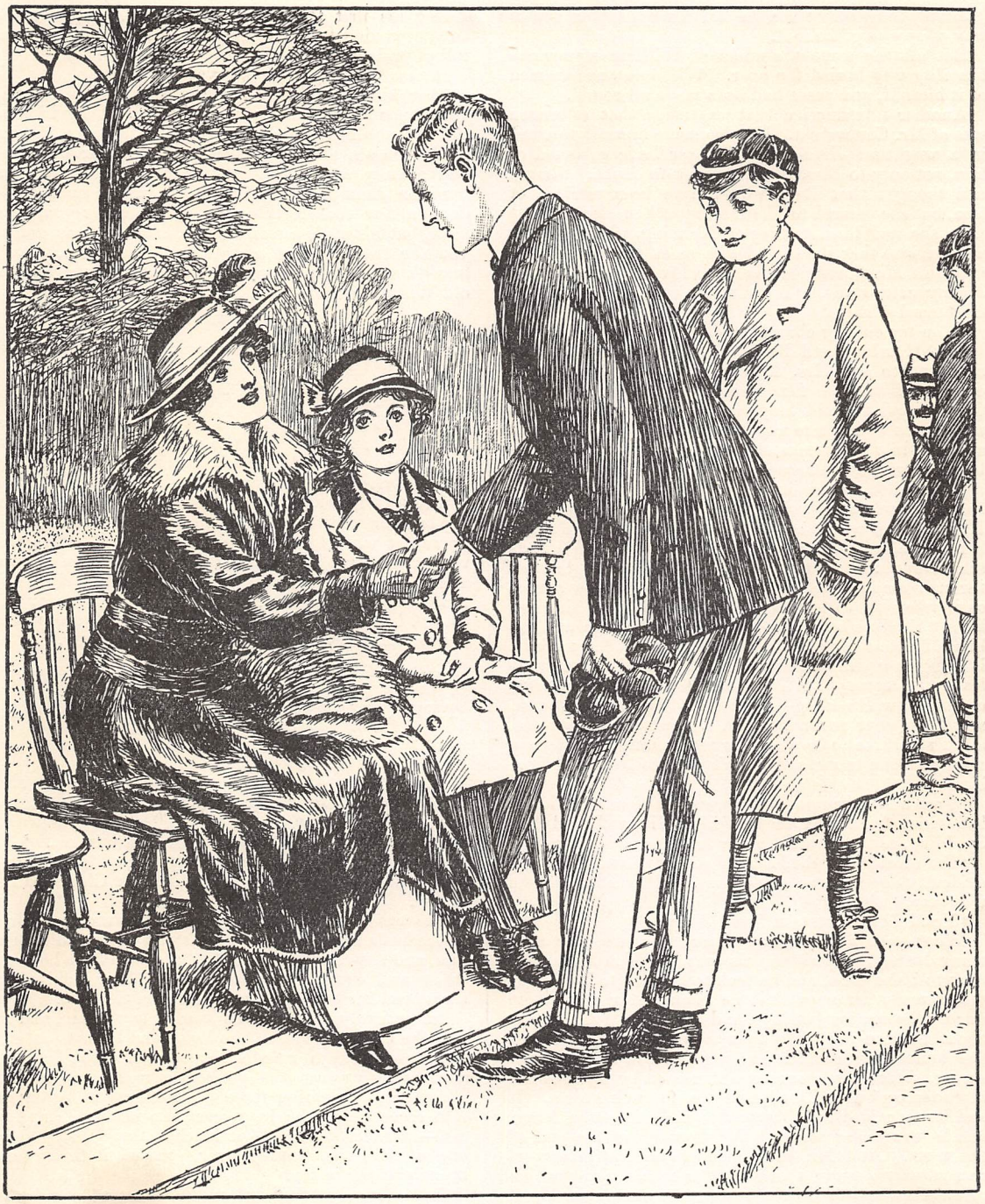
'I say,' groaned Perks, as soon as the Doctor had dismissed us; 'we shall never hear the end of it. The tale will be all over the school to-morrow. That young Elliot'll——'



"'What is the meaning of this?' he asked."

But somehow I didn't think he *would* tell. I liked the look in the little chap's eyes behind his big glasses, and I told Perks so. 'Depend upon it, he's not that sort,' I said. And, strange to say, I was right; he has since turned out to be an utter brick. Perks thinks so, too; in fact, just lately the other fellows have formed the habit of calling him and Perks and me the Triple Alliance.

ETHEL TALBOT.



"Williams was introduced to Mrs. Henshaw."

JIMMY, THE NEW BOY.

(Concluded from page 371.)

WILLIAMS was introduced to Mrs. Henshaw and Ruth, and sat with them for a time, talking quietly. Afterwards Mrs. Henshaw said: 'Why didn't you tell me what a nice boy Williams was, Jimmy? He has the nicest manners of any of them.'

'Yes, he's a decent chap,' said Jimmy awkwardly.

'He said he liked you very much,' said Ruth. 'I asked him. I like him too; he's so gentle in his way of speaking.'

Jimmy laughed. 'Yes, he has always had a gentle way of speaking,' he said.

But all the same the effect of Williams's previous brutality was buried for ever. Williams was ashamed of it himself, and peace had been made all round.

Another introduction that was made that afternoon was of Mr. Cartwright. He also made himself pleasant in a way that Jimmy would never have expected of him, not only to Mrs. Henshaw but to Ruth. Jimmy had thought that Ruth would have been terrified of him, but she seemed to like talking to him almost more than she had liked talking to Manning, whom Jimmy was anxious that she should admire as much as he did. 'I think Mr. Cartwright is a positive lamb,' she told Jimmy afterwards. 'I can't think why you're all so frightened of him.'

'You try cutting chapel,' said Jimmy.

Mrs. Henshaw and Ruth, Mr. Spedding and Jimmy all went to see Mrs. Ringrose, who could not make enough of them. Mr. Ringrose had gone back to Oxford, and the old lady told them that he had got some work to do there which would pay him very well, and that in a few weeks she was going to leave Whyborough and set up house at Oxford.

'We did think that it would be a good thing for him to take to schoolmastering,' she said, 'and I think the Head Master would have offered him the Sixth Form here, if he had cared to take it. But the fact is he finds schoolboys rather troublesome.' Here she beamed through her spectacles at Jimmy, and gave him a nod, as if referring to a nice little secret between him and her. 'He likes boys, you know. Of course he was one himself not so very long ago. But I think the work he is doing now will suit him better. I shall be sorry to leave Whyborough, as I like boys too, and always have, as you know, Spedding—I mean Mr. Spedding, of course, and I beg your pardon. Still, Oxford is a nice place, and I shall like to be wherever my Johnny is. He is a very good son to me, and I don't want to be parted from him.'

'I am afraid you gave that poor young man rather a bad time, from what I can hear, Jimmy,' said Mr. Spedding, as they walked away from the little house.

'I'm afraid they did,' said Mrs. Henshaw. 'But he evidently doesn't bear any malice. He must be quite a nice man, I think.'

'Yes, he's a decent sort,' said Jimmy.

What gave Jimmy almost more pleasure than anything during this visit was the way in which his mother took to Henderson, and he took to her and to Ruth. It was already arranged that he should stay with them during the coming holidays, and they were full of talk about the fun they would have with the New Forest Deerhounds, with which hunting goes on well into the spring. Jimmy's pleasure was increased by the prospect of 'rooming' with Henderson the following term. It had been decided that Scott should go into the Navy, and he was going to leave Whyborough at the end of the term. And Mr. Stanhope had said that he saw no reason why Jimmy should not take his place, which meant that he would be sure to make the arrangement, especially after he had been talked to by Mr. Spedding.

It all meant that Henderson and Jimmy were now chosen and fast friends, certainly for their schooldays and probably for life, and Jimmy knew that he could not have found a better friend. If Henderson felt the same, then it was one of the best things he had done during his first term at Whyborough that he should have been able to make him feel like that, and he was full of pride and satisfaction.

It was a pride that he was justified in. As his mother kissed him good-bye she said: 'I'm so glad Henderson is your chief friend, Jimmy. I like him far the best of all the boys of your age, even than Pilling, though he's a nice funny boy too.' And Mr. Spedding had already said, walking up the platform with his hand on Jimmy's shoulder: 'Well, you seem to have done a few foolish things, Jimmy, during your first term, but it's made a man of you, and if it has gained you the friendship of a boy like Henderson, then I haven't much fear for you as long as you stay at dear old Whyborough.' ARCHIBALD MARSHALL.

THE END.

A PET OYSTER.

WHEN I was a little girl I had some strange pets, but an oyster was the oddest of them all. Its home was in a tumbler of salt water, and I fed it daily on oatmeal, delighted when seeing the shell slightly open and tiny 'tendrils,' as I called them, float on the water. My brothers roared with laughter when I asserted these proved it was beginning to know me, and, after some teasing, let out the secret. They had taken out the oyster, sealing up the empty shell, so that I had all the time been merely feeding that! Was it not too bad? Of course, I was a very little girl, as you may suppose; but it was long before I heard the last of my oyster.

THE UGLIEST GIRL IN THE SCHOOL.

(*Concluded from page* 367.)

THE taut rope slackened, we all heaved a deep sigh of relief, and the men came forward and looked over the brink eagerly.

'Bravo, little miss!' said the old fisherman. 'All right, so far.' No one else spoke; we all waited in a tense silence, every eye intently fixed on Chim and her doings.

She was none too soon, for the tide was now very close to the boy's body. We saw her stoop down and look at him, and then swiftly she untied the rope from her own waist and secured it around his. Then, looking up, she waved her hand and gave a tug on the rope.

Immediately the two men started hauling in, and we saw the boy's body leave the beach and begin to ascend. Slowly but surely it rose in the air foot by foot, bumping awkwardly against the projecting rocks and bushes. Then, swiftly clearing these obstructions, it swung off into space where the long open gap occurred; and at last—glorious moment!—it reached the cliff-edge, and one of the men, leaning over, grasped it firmly and brought it to the top.

And there, stretched out on the grass at our feet, a terribly white and dishevelled object, lay the unlucky boy—saved by our little Chim!

We raised a faint cheer, which was heard by the lonely figure on the beach below, for she waved her hand to us again. Forthwith the injured lad was carried back some distance from the edge, and while the

two men quickly untied the rope some of the girls busied themselves about his still unconscious form.

The rope was soon ready again, and then—

'Now for the little maid!' said the old man, and, coiling it ready for a throw, he turned to the edge of the cliff once more.

But then came a sudden stop. For the younger man, whose eyes were sharper than his mate's, gripped the latter's arm and pointed to the rope. Then the old man examined it closely, and gave an exclamation of dismay. It was badly frayed! Several strands had parted at a spot which came somewhere about the middle of the coil. And Chim's life depended on that rope! There was no time for delay—the tide was still coming in—a decision must be made at once.

'I think 'twill still hold her weight, Jim,' said the old fisherman at last. 'God grant it will! There's only one thing to do—we must bind the place round. Can you young ladies give us something to wrap round the rope to strengthen it and save it going any further?'

In an instant everybody was offering something—handkerchiefs, hat-bands, hair-ribbons, even stockings. And it was the last that the men eventually used, wrapping them round the dangerous place like a thick bandage, and fastening them there with string.

Then, with many an anxious thought and unspoken prayer, the rope was launched out into space. It was time, for the little strip of sand was almost covered now, and the tide was driving Chim further and further back against the foot of the cliff. The rope flew down in a snake-like coil, uncurling as it fell, and the aim was good. The end of it landed close behind Chim, and she seized it and fastened it hastily around her. The sea was now wetting her feet.

She tugged on the rope, and the men commenced to pull it in, very slowly and gingerly, with set faces, and deadly fear in their eyes. Little by little Chim came up towards us, past the overhanging rocks and bushes, until she had reached about half-way to the top. Then, leaving the rugged portion of the projecting ledges and crags behind her, she swung off into mid-air where the open gap came, when there was nothing at all between her and the cliff-edge, some thirty feet above. She had only been pulled up a little higher, when suddenly to our horror, all in an instant, there was a sharp hiss in the air, the men fell backward on the grass with a cry of dismay, and we all shrieked together. The rope had parted, and Chim was gone!

Every one rushed to the edge and looked over tremblingly, dreading what they would see. And then—oh, the bliss and relief!—we found that things were not quite as bad as we expected. For in a miraculous way Chim had dropped straight down into one of the small stunted trees which grew on the ledges below, and the rope, which was still tied to her body, had become entangled in the branches: and although our little friend had crashed through the tree with the force of her fall, she was trying with might and main to pull herself up into it again. Now her training in rope-climbing in the 'gym' stood her in good stead. For, bit by bit, Chim climbed up the rope with as much ease as one of her own namesakes, and pulled herself into the branches of the tree.

When we saw this we gave a very tearful shout of joy, and then we laughed and cried hysterically, and danced and shook hands and patted each other on the back like mad things.

'Thank God!' said the old fisherman simply.

''Tis a mercy, sure enough,' said his mate. 'I made sure she'd gone.'

'Well done, missie!' roared out the old man to Chim. 'You hold on tight, and we'll soon get you up. The big rope won't be long now.'

'Right you are! I'm all right!' came back the shrill little voice on the quiet evening air.

The dusk was coming on now, and things began to get indistinct. Chim down below became a white blur against the darkness of the cliff. Light faded from the sky, and night closed in over the sea. We wondered how Chim was feeling down there, clinging for life to the tree. We knew now what a brave little heart beat in her small breast, so we did not suppose that she was particularly frightened, although her situation was dangerous in the extreme. Of course, as long as she kept her hold she was all right, for the sturdy trees which grew on the face of the cliff had withstood the storms of many years. Still, the position was a trying one.

At last, after what seemed a very long time, we saw the rescue party approaching. There they were at last—lights in the distance and the sound of running feet.

They soon came up to us—half-a-dozen coastguards with ropes and lanterns, together with our schoolfellows, all breathing hard after their long run. Then not a moment was wasted. It was a pleasure to see the businesslike way in which those coastguards went to work, and how each individual handyman wanted to be the one to go down and bring up Chim. But the younger fisherman quickly settled that and asserted his rights in a determined fashion. 'The little missie saved our mate, and I'm going to save her!' he said firmly.

So down he went at the end of a stout rope, with a lantern secured to his waist, for it was now quite dark. He soon reached the ledge where Chim's tree was growing, and we who were watching saw his light moving about like a firefly in the mirk: and a moment later he waved it as a signal to be pulled up again. Everybody took a hand on the rope this time, schoolgirls included, so as to feel that we were all really helping in Chim's rescue, and swiftly the fisherman was raised to the top once more, with our dear little Chim on his back, her arms clinging round his brawny neck and her small legs encircling his waist.

What a cheer those men gave then! But it was outdone altogether by the excited voices of our girls, as we all clustered around and absolutely overwhelmed Chim, who simply said, 'How's the poor boy? I'm so glad I was able to save him.'

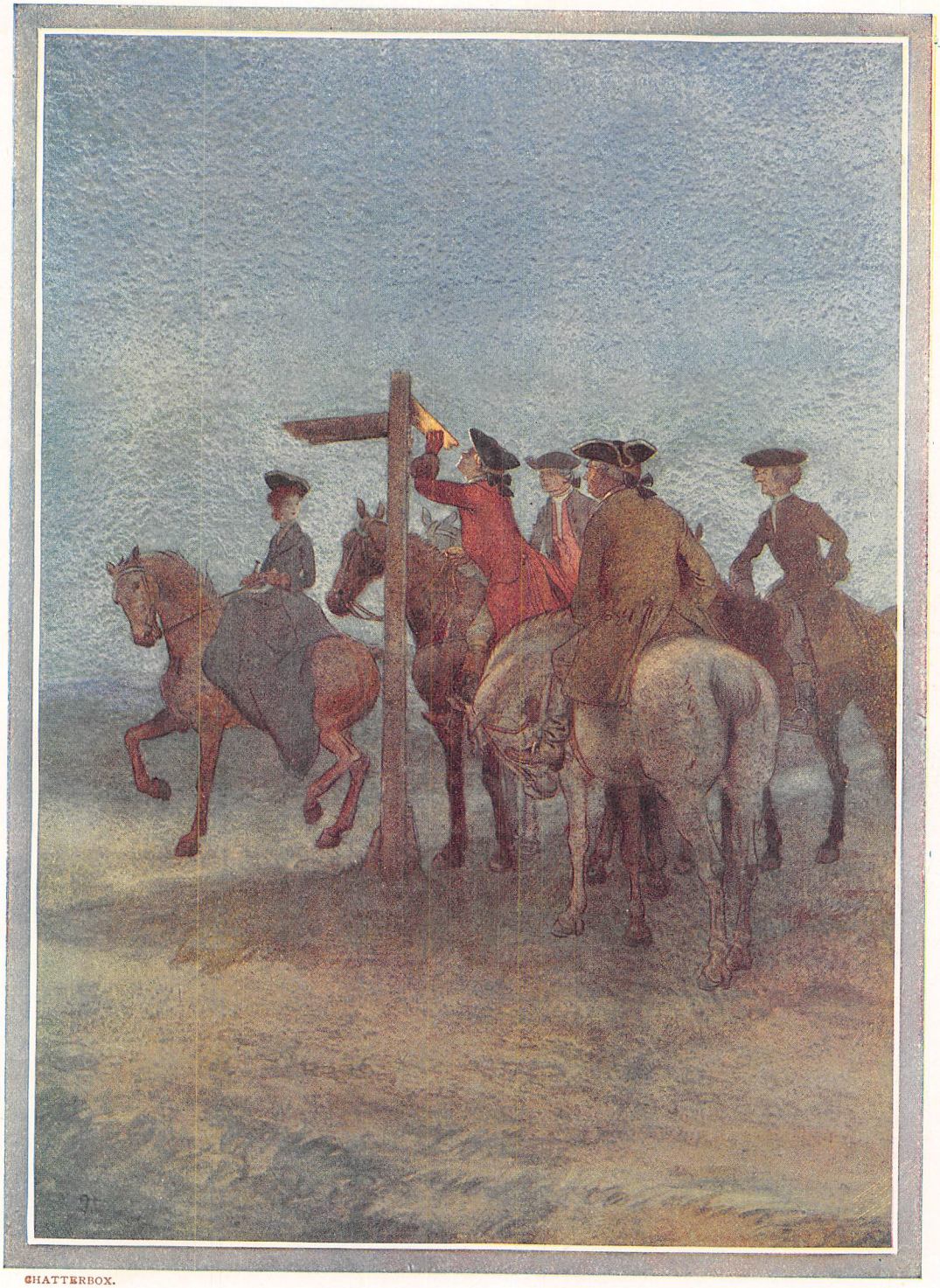
How we cheered her and kissed her, and almost hugged her to death!

Then the boy, who moaned and showed signs of returning life, was gently placed on a hurdle, and we all moved off in a straggling procession towards the lights of Dunmouth. But Chim started for home on the old fisherman's shoulder, although of course she said she was all right and could easily walk; but as no one would hear of that, she laughingly gave way. And so they carried her home to the very gates of Coniston House.

It was quite a triumphal progress for Chim—or rather Eva, for she left her nickname behind her for ever down on the beach at the foot of the cliff, and nobody ever thought of calling her by it again.

ARTHUR THOMSON.

"The fisherman was raised to the top."



CHATTERBOX.

AT THE CROSS-ROADS: WHICH WAY?

FROM A DRAWING BY HUGH THOMSON.

"They saw before them a solitary figure."

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Continued from page 378.)

ACHMET, coming up at that moment, made a welcome distraction.

Once the state of affairs was explained to him, the Moor appeared absolutely beside himself with rage. The boys forgot their own grief for a moment in watching the storm of fury which possessed their dignified friend. With shaking arms upraised above his head, Achmet called for all the punishments of Allah upon the thief. 'Never was heard such a terrible curse'; and, indeed, that string of imprecations reminded Sandy irresistibly of the 'Jackdaw of Rheims.'

Then, all of a sudden, the paroxysm of rage passed, and Achmet, grave and serene as ever, smoothed down his snowy draperies. 'Kismet,' he said, quietly. 'It is the will of God that the treasure should be lost; Allah-il-Allah!'

'But I don't believe it is!' Dick expostulated. 'I think it's the will of Allah that we should jolly well look for it—anyway, I'm going to!'

'Who can have taken it?' Sandy asked, despondently. 'There isn't anybody who knows, or could know now that the stone is all scratched out.'

'The Jews——?' Dick suggested.

'But they *didn't* know—that's just it... otherwise they wouldn't have tried to make us tell.'

'And we know it isn't Langridge——'

'And there isn't anybody else.'

'Well, there must be; or where has the treasure gone? It's simply silly to talk like that.'

'It's no use talking as if you knew everything! Somebody else must have found out about it.'

In their anger and disappointment the boys were very near to quarrelling. It was Achmet who intervened, speaking with an entire recovery of his usual serene good sense. 'See, we must waste no more time in talk. The torn plants, as you perceive, are still fresh and green; therefore, all this must have been done scarce an hour ago, seeing how hot is the sun at noonday. The thief cannot have gone far, weighed down as he must be with the burden of the treasure. If we hasten, we shall overtake him.'

'But we don't know which way he went,' objected Dick wearily.

'There are but two paths by which a beast of burden could travel hence,' the Moor answered. 'Assad and Temar shall take the one, and we the other. So this villain cannot escape us.'

The good sense of the Moor's words, his calm confidence, inspired the boys, and it was with renewed hope that they mounted their donkeys and rode with Achmet at the top of their speed along the path which he had chosen.

For an hour or more they pressed on thus along the skirt of the mountains; but no soul appeared in sight on the sandy bridle-path. It was broilingly hot, and the way was rough and uneven, so that even the sure-footed donkeys stumbled continually.

Dick's head ached unbearably with the heat, and, doubtless for the same reason, Sandy had what their old nurse had been wont to call a 'a bad pain in the temper.'

They rode on drearily, no longer dazzled and buoyed up by any hopes of success, for there is no disappointment so bitter as that which follows upon the very heels of what seemed accomplishment.

And then, suddenly and unexpectedly, on rounding a jutting spur of rock they saw before them, not half a mile away, a solitary figure.

(*Concluded on page* 394.)

A GOOD-FRIDAY CUSTOM.

HERE is a strange Good-Friday custom that may interest readers of *Chatterbox*. Centuries ago a generous citizen of London—whose name was lost in the Great Fire of 1666, when so many records were destroyed—left a sum of money large enough to provide every year a sixpence for each of twenty-one old widow-women, all to be of a certain parish in London.

The practice of distributing the bounty still continues, I believe, and each Good Friday twenty-one widows, who no doubt have been chosen out beforehand, attend service in the church and then walk in procession down the graveyard.

On a tombstone the sixpences are laid, and each of the old ladies must herself pick up her present. If—so I have read—she be too 'rheumaticky' to do so, she must, by the terms of the will, go without her dole. When the coins have all been taken, each one of the procession is presented with a further gift of a hot-cross bun, and then the ceremony is over for the year.

Ethel Talbot.

THE ROTATION OF CROPS.

A FARMER'S life is a very busy one, and his occupations are numerous and varied. If we wished to describe the nature of his work in a few words, we could not, perhaps, do better than say that he was engaged in producing food. Some of this food, like wheat and potatoes, is vegetable food; some of it, like the sheep which are killed for meat, is animal food. Now, this broad distinction in the work of a farmer is worth remembering, because it helps us to understand many things which might not otherwise be clear. We may put the matter in another way, by saying that the farmer is usually both a grower of crops and a breeder of stock.

If we visit all the farmer's fields, we shall see that this distinction is stamped, as it were, upon them. Some of the fields are covered with grass year after year, and the grass is either mown for hay or is eaten by the cattle as it grows. These meadows or pastures are, therefore, kept for the feeding of the farmer's animals or stock. But there are other fields—the arable fields—which are ploughed, and sown, and produce crops of different kinds, such as wheat, barley, and potatoes, which are usually, but not always, taken away as food for human beings. It is the arable fields which give the farmer most trouble, labour, and anxiety. The others require little attention from year to year, except at hay-time, though, of course, the farmer has a good deal of labour and anxiety in connection with the stock which is fed from these fields.

If we selected one of the arable fields, and kept watch upon it year after year, we should find that the farmer does not always grow the same kind of crops upon it.

Instead of seeing a crop of wheat upon it every year, we should sometimes see turnips, barley, potatoes, oats, or clover growing. We should find the farmer changing his crop every year. However good the last crop might have been, the farmer would not repeat it, but would turn to something else. The changes would at first appear erratic, and we might think that the farmer selected his crop according to his whim. But if we continued our observations over a fair number of years, we should see the same crops repeated at intervals, and we should even discover that they followed each other in a certain order; that, in fact, though no single crop was immediately repeated, a certain round or series of crops was repeated in strict order. This is the farmer's system, which he has learned by experience and education to be a wise one; and it is known as the rotation of crops.

A plant requires various materials for its growth, such as water, carbon, nitrogen, sulphur, and phosphorus. The water is absorbed from the soil, the carbon is obtained from the air by a process somewhat similar to breathing; and the remaining substances are taken from the soil, the most important of them being nitrogen. A growing plant uses up these elements from the soil at a faster rate than they can be naturally renewed, with the result that the soil becomes exhausted. While the supply is sufficient to feed one generation of plants, it is not sufficient to feed one generation after another, and the later plants would starve and die if some means were not taken the renew the supply artificially. The farmer has to do this at considerable expense by adding chemical and other manures to the soil. But all plants do not take out the same materials in quite the same proportions; some take more of this, and some more of that. It follows, therefore, that if the farmer wishes to use up all the plant-nutriment or food which the soil contains, or which he puts into it in the form of chemicals, he must grow different kinds of plants or crops upon it in turns. If he does not do this, some kinds of plant-food remain partly unused, and this is wasteful in the sense that the soil is not being put to its full use. This is the principal reason that the farmer practises a rotation of crops. There are other reasons which will be mentioned by-and-by.

There are many kinds of rotation of crops followed in different parts of the country. The farmer may work the round of two, three, four, five, or even more different kinds of crops, beginning again with the first when he has finished with the last, and taking them always in the same order. We may take as an actual example of a rotation one which is known as the Norfolk rotation, and is very commonly used. The crops are grown in the following order:—Roots (that is, turnips, swedes, potatoes, &c.), barley, clover, and wheat. Let us suppose that a crop of wheat, which is the last in the rotation, has been reaped in the field in September. The farmer will not sow anything more upon this land until the following May or June, when he will put in turnip seeds. In the meantime he will plough and harrow the field many times, in order to get rid of the wheat stubble and weeds, and to lighten the land, or, as he would say, to clean it. The turnip seed, sown in June, produces turnips in autumn, which are used as food for cattle and sheep. Many of the turnips will be rooted up and carted away to the farm; but very often some of the turnips are left upon the field, and pens are set up, into which the sheep are turned, so that they may feed upon the turnips in the field itself. They trample the soil a good deal, and in this and other ways they do good to the land.

When the sheep have eaten off the turnips, they are sold to the butcher. The field is lightly ploughed, and got ready for barley, which is sown in March or April of what we may call the second year. Barley is chosen, because it is too late in the year to sow wheat. Almost at the same time clover seed and grass seeds are sown among the young barley, so that all these are growing at the same time. The barley is ready for reaping in August or September, and when it is cut the low-lying clover and grass are left on the ground, where they remain all through the winter. They flower about the end of June of the third year, and then they are cut and made into hay. As soon as rain comes and softens the ground, the farmer begins to plough his field again, and get it ready for wheat. This is sown in October, and the plant begins to grow at once, but it is checked by the winter cold before it has advanced very far. It revives, however, in the following spring, and is ready for harvesting in September of the fourth year. Then the ground is prepared for another root crop, and the rotation begins again.

We have already seen one reason for this rotation; there are many others, of which only a few can be named. The farmer is enabled to vary his work, and fill up all the year with labour. He is not reaping all his fields at once. Some of them are growing roots or clover, while others are growing barley or wheat. He is not so entirely dependent upon the weather as he would be if he grew only one kind of crop. The rain which may spoil his wheat to some extent may be good for the turnips upon which he will feed his cattle and sheep. And there is another curious advantage in rotating the crops. Every plant has its parasites—insects or plants—which prey upon it. Where there is any particular plant, there also are its parasites. If a similar crop were sown at once in the same field, the parasites remaining in the soil from the last crop would be waiting to attack the new one. But when another crop is substituted, they are baulked, as it were, of their prey, and they feel the effects of starvation. Before their own special crop—their host, as we may call it—comes round again in the proper order of rotation, they may be quite starved out. W. A. Atkinson.

THE 'GREEN CHICKEN.'

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER, the French author, had a petted cat. One day, a friend, about to start on a journey, brought *his* pet, a parrot, to Gautier, who had promised to look after him during his owner's absence.

The cat had never before seen a parrot. She stared in wonder at this strange creature, and her master read her thoughts in her eyes. Her first thought was: 'This must be a green chicken. What a very nice dinner for me!'

Down from the writing-table jumped Pussy, and crouched in a dark corner like a panther in the jungle ready to pounce upon its prey. The parrot noted all her movements. Evidently he understood them, for he, too, prepared for war by ruffling up his feathers, sharpening his beak, and stretching out his claws.

Suddenly the cat bounded on to his perch.

'Have you had your breakfast, Jim?' screamed the bird.

Pussy was scared nearly out of her senses by this voice, and at once gave up all idea of a feast. Her eyes said plainly: 'Oh, dear, I was sadly mistaken. This is *not* a green chicken. It is not a chicken of any sort; it is a *gentleman!*'

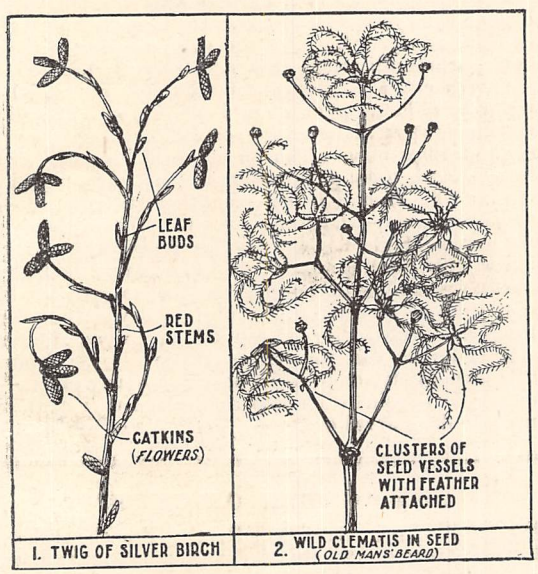
She rushed wildly under the bed, and remained there in hiding for the rest of the day. E. D.

EYES THAT SEE:

THINGS WE OFTEN OVERLOOK.

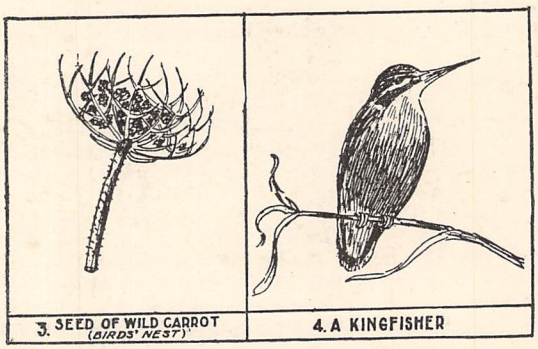
XII.—ON A WINTER WALK.

ONE often hears people say, 'What is the use of going to walk in the country in the winter? There is nothing to see, and therefore it is not interesting!' Well, a few days ago, on a day when the whole world seemed frost-bound, I went right out into the country in order to prove that this statement is most untrue. It was a glorious afternoon, and I thought I would make my way towards some of the places of which I have told you in my earlier articles. As I trudged along the country roads, I kept my eyes open for things of interest about which I could tell you.



The hedges, where the sun had not reached them, were all covered with hoar-frost, a most beautiful sight, for frost always seems to bring out the distinctive branching of the different trees and bushes. I passed a number of young Silver Birches, always attractive with their silver bark and fairy-like branching. The catkins are thick this year, hanging gracefully on the ends of the reddish supple twigs (fig. 1). In several of the trees I found Witches' Brooms, or Witches' Knots, as they are sometimes called. Do you know them? They are thick masses of twigs, which look like unfinished rook-nests. They are found in other trees as well, Hornbeam, for instance, but are most common in silver birch. The cause of them? Why, a fungus attacks the young buds, and the result is, that they keep on dividing and dividing until this tangled mass is formed. They get their name, Witches' Broom, because they are supposed to look like the brooms that witches were thought to ride upon when they flew about!

In the hedges there are still some sprays of Old Man's Beard, the seed-vessels of Travellers' Joy, or Wild Clematis. Have you ever realised that these



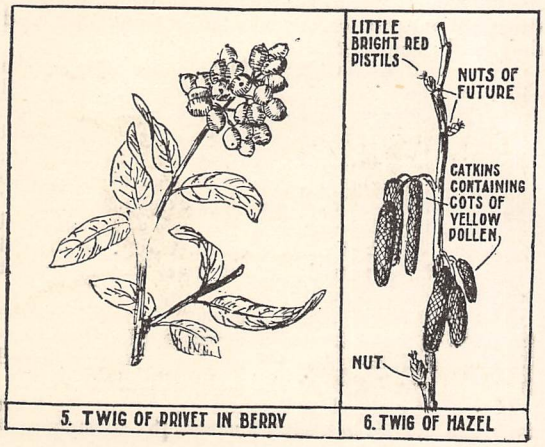
clusters of silky tails are the means by which the seeds of this plant get about in the world (fig. 2)? Note that the tails are like feathers.

It is at this time of the year that the ever-greens come into their own, I always think. There being no leaves on other trees and plants, they stand out, calling attention to their shining beauty.

My way took me along by a canal, and here I found heads of Wild Carrot gone to seed. Do you know this when you see it? Wild Carrot belongs to that big family of plants the Umbelliferæ (plants with flowers in a group like an umbrella or parasol), as do also Fools' Parsley, Parsnip, and others. However, Wild Carrot has an easy distinction from all other members of the family, because the outer groups of flowers turn in over the centre, thus enclosing the prickly fruits, and forming what country children call Birds' Nests (fig. 3).

The canal, near its outlet into the river, is not frozen over, but as I go further up the ice has formed, and still further up there is skating, I know. Snow has fallen since the ice formed, so that from the skater's point of view the ice is spoiled. I was much interested to notice the marks in the snow of the passage of some birds, and also some rabbits, which have apparently been having a scamper all over the ice. In one spot I noticed a number of much larger claw-prints, and I came to the conclusion that there was a Heron about somewhere; I have seen one about here in the summer. Suddenly there flitted up the canal, only about two or three feet above the ice, a very beautiful bird. Its back was of brilliant sky blue, and its breast of a terra-cotta red. I did not at first know what kind of bird it was, but later I saw it sitting on a branch looking down at the ice, and then I recognised it as a Kingfisher. One can know it by its brilliant colour, its long beak, short tail (almost no tail at all), and stumpy body (fig. 4). I watched it for some time, and suddenly it vanished, I expect into a hole in the canal bank. A Kingfisher's nest is very interesting, and very difficult to obtain, but there is a fine specimen in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington, London. Mrs. Kingfisher has this nest in a hole in the ground, but she does not make it for

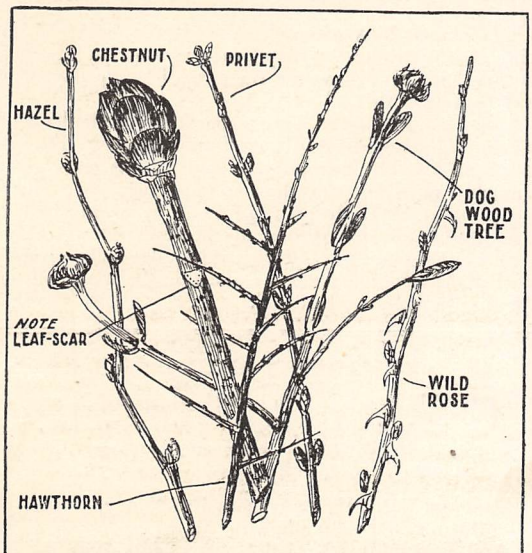
herself; she takes possession of the home of some four-legged animal of small size. She is always careful to select a burrow which slopes upward, so that there is no risk of being swamped. The actual nest is made entirely of minute fish-bones! You must know that Mr. Kingfisher lives on tiny fish; he sits motionless on a



5. TWIG OF PRIVET IN BERRY — 6. TWIG OF HAZEL

twig overhanging the water, or on a stone on the bank, and watches the water intently for small fish. When he sees one come near enough to the surface for him, he makes a sudden dart, and catches it in his beak. He then generally returns to his twig with the fish held firmly across his beak, throws it up in the air with a quick jerk, catches it head downwards, and swallows it whole. Look out for a Kingfisher. He is a bit hard to see, because he is so very cautious to keep hidden, but it is always easier to see him in the winter, as there is not so much cover.

Coming home I came along the piece of road where I wrote the article about the hedge. Of course, there



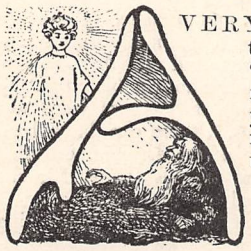
7. VARIOUS WINTER TWIGS

was nothing much left of the plants of which I told you, but I found some lovely pyramids of Privet berries. Do you know them? They are very useful in decoration when flowers are scarce, they are so black and shiny (fig. 5). Here also I found some beautiful Ivy, which the frost had coloured most delightfully in shades of red, yellow, and brown. The Hazel nuts are full of catkins, giving promise of nuts next year (fig. 6). All twigs are tipped with little knobs, some long and thin, others short and fat, containing the young leaves of the future carefully wrapped up in their winter great-coats to protect them from the frost and cold (fig. 7). The shoots of the Chestnuts are already getting shiny and sticky. Have you ever gathered some twigs of Chestnut, put them in water, and watch them grow (see Chestnut twig in fig. 7). It is an interesting study, and will astonish you if you have never tried it. I always have a few every year just for the joy of watching them.

This article concludes my series, and I hope that you have found something in this set to make you appreciate more this beautiful world in which we live. If you learn to always look about you wherever you may be, you will never be lonely, for Dame Nature is the very best of companions, and she never fails you.

E. M. Barlow.

A QUEEN THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.



VERY young bride—not yet in her teens! No, I have not written 'bride' in mistake for 'bride's-maid.' Four hundred and sixty years ago marriages were by no means necessarily, or even usually, the grown-up affairs they are now, and if any guests at the wedding of Lady Margaret Beaufort and Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, troubled their heads about the bride's age, they only wondered that she had not been 'married off' years before.

It was yet more wonderful that she herself had been allowed a voice in the matter. Certainly her field of choice was not very wide: still, this very young lady had been asked which of two suitors for her hand she preferred, and—guided, we are told, by a dream—she made her selection unhesitatingly.

Altogether, the Lady Margaret was an important little person. The grand-daughter of John of Gaunt, and great-grand-daughter of Edward III., she was so perilously near to the English throne that its shadow fell heavily across her childhood.

A child-wife, a child-mother, and a child-widow, for she was only fourteen when, in 1456, her husband died, leaving her alone in the world with a five-months-old baby boy. A stormy, troubled, perplexing world it was. The Wars of the Roses had just broken out, wasting all the land with fire and blood. The greater and more important any one might be, the less was his chance of keeping his head safely on his shoulders; and the Lady Margaret's baby was an even more important person than his mother.

If she had lived a hundred years later, a great many people would certainly have looked upon Margaret as

the possible future Queen of England; but in the fifteenth century no woman had ever sat on the English throne. There were no votes for women in those days, and it never seems to have occurred to anybody—least of all to Margaret herself—that a woman *could* be Queen in her own right, but she might pass on that right to her son.

'This pretty boy,' exclaimed Henry VI. once, 'will wear the garland in peace for which we so sinfully contend,' and the little mother treasured up the saying and never forgot it.

Poor mother! Her boy was taken away from her, for his own safety, before he was five years old, and he never returned to her loving guardianship.

While she was still in her teens, Margaret re-married, was left a widow a second time, and married a third time to a widower with a family of children. She probably had no more choice in these marriages than in her first, if as much; and her third husband, who belonged to the York party, while her own family were faithful to the House of Lancaster, was appointed by the new King, Edward IV., as a kind of gaoler to the poor young heiress.

It was ordered that she should 'be kept in some secret place at home, without servants or company,' so that she might not communicate with her son. However, Margaret's goodness and gentleness so won her husband's heart that, instead of treating her harshly, he became a friend to her boy for her sake.

But for the next eighteen or twenty years—just the years that are fullest of work and pleasure in the life of a modern woman—Margaret lived in absolute seclusion. She had no more children, and probably she saw very little even of her husband, who was busy fighting and plotting. Yet those long, dull years were not wasted. If, as one would fancy, there can have been but little time for 'lessons' in her strange, crowded childhood, she made up now for lost time, for she became one of the most learned women of the age.

But she did not become a mere bookworm. Looking out from her home-prison on the struggling, storm-tossed world, she longed intensely to help the strugglers and comfort the sufferers, to leave it in some way a better place than she had found it. And then, looking up to God, her longings turned to prayers that He Himself would help and teach her how best to help others.

It was in great measure the Lady Margaret's gentle influence that prepared the way for the marriage of her son with the Princess Elizabeth of York, which brought the Wars of the Roses to an end and restored peace to England. In 1485 Henry VII. ascended the throne, and henceforward his mother was honoured by all as the second greatest lady in England.

Left a widow for the third time, rich and powerful, she was free at last to carry out her longing dreams. 'It would fill a volume,' says an old chronicler, 'to recount her good deeds.' Some of them remain to this day. Christ's College and St. John's College, at Cambridge, were both endowed by her, and she gave not only money, but loving interest and sympathy to the students who gathered there.

Once, when looking out of a window in Christ's College, she saw a don beating an undergraduate. Corporal punishment was a recognised part of University life in those days, and it would never have occurred to any one that such a proceeding was anything but proper and beneficial. But Lady Margaret's tender heart was troubled by the energy with which the Don was wielding his stick, and so she called out to him imploringly in Latin: '*Lente, lente!*' ('Gently, gently!').

You can scarcely visit Oxford or Cambridge—for she was a benefactress to both Universities—without coming upon a portrait of the Lady Margaret in her old age, clad in widow's weeds, her face sad yet calm, with the sweet, patient calm of one who has suffered much and risen above suffering.

When she died—in 1509, a few months after her son—it was said that 'all England for her death had cause of weeping. The poor creatures that were wont to receive her alms, to whom she was always piteous and merciful; the students . . . to whom she was a mother; . . . all the virtuous and devout persons to whom she was as a loving sister'; and even 'the common people of the realm,' for whose cause, in that age of tyranny and oppression, she had often pleaded, taking, as the old writer quaintly puts it, 'right great displeasure' at any wrong done them.

And the sweetness of her memory lasted down the centuries, so that between three and four hundred years after her death the great College for Women founded at Oxford was dedicated to the Lady Margaret.

If she had claimed and gained her 'rights'—if her name had a place in history amongst the sovereigns of England—could she have 'served her generation by the will of God' any better?

LILIAN DALTON.

THE CROP THAT FAILED.

AN Arab trader was staying for a time with a negro king named Sonouna. This king was continually asking the trader for glass beads, ornaments of which he was very fond. At last the Arab, tired of these requests, told King Sonouna that he had only to sow beads in his garden in order to obtain a fine crop of them.

The king gladly took the man's advice, and sowed some glass beads in his little garden. Day by day he looked for the bead plants, which, of course, did not appear.

'*You* must look after these seeds for me,' said the king to the trader. 'They are very slow in growing, but perhaps if you water them well every day, they will come up in time.'

By-and-by, when the Arab trader had got all the ivory he wanted, he wished to be off to the coast. To this, however, the black king, who had all his wits about him, and now saw that he had been deceived, refused his consent. 'Wait awhile,' he said; 'you shall go when the beads have grown, not before.'

So in that place the unfortunate trader had to remain until King Sonouna's death; and thus he was punished for the lie which he had told.

E. D.

JUST FANCY!

'COME here! Come here!' whispered Nancy,
'Tom and Baby,—come quick as you can,
For close to that rose-bush—*just fancy!*—
I'm sure there's a fairy-man!'

Tom and Baby, they scampered to Nancy,
But no fairy-man could they spy;
And Tom said, 'Oh, pooh! 'Twas *just fancy!*'
And Baby began to cry!

ETHEL TALBOT.

THE SONG OF THE SEA-PEBBLES.

BIG pebbles, small pebbles, flat or round,
Listen you all to the merry sound
Of the strong west wind that brings the storm:
Here comes a game to keep us warm!
Big pebbles, small pebbles, red, black, white,
Mixed in the jostling that keeps us bright,
Let the crabs and weeds see how much we can stand:
'Twill be ages yet ere we're worn to sand.
Heave-ho! All together!
Hey! for the wild and stormy weather.
Swish—crash! Are we not brave
So to dance on the roaring wave?
Now for the race: who goes the highest
Up on the sunny beach gets driest;
And the prize for the one who can longest lie
Is a longer look at the great blue sky!
Another wave, with a noise like thunder,
Breaks; and, laughing, we all go under,
To rest in the hollows beneath the sea
Till we come up again for another spree.

GERALD BULL.

INSECT SAMSONS.

YOU sometimes hear it said of a person who has been ill that he is 'as weak as a fly,' but the truth of the matter is that a fly, in proportion to its size, is much stronger than a man, or even a horse.

Some years ago a naturalist made various experiments with insects. He took a common house-fly, and holding it by the wings put it on a match. The fly promptly grasped the match firmly with its feet, and when lifted up into the air it took the match with it, still holding on with its feet. Now the match was seven times longer than the fly and just about as thick as its body, so that to equal that, a man 5 ft. 6 in. in height would have to pick up and carry a great beam 38½ feet long, which of course would be utterly impossible.

Another experiment with the fly was to tie a piece of cotton loosely round one of its legs. The cotton was a yard long, and the insect tried to fly away with it, but could not do it. A few inches were cut off, but still it was too heavy. At last when the length was reduced to 12 inches it rose into the air and went soaring off quite happily, dragging the cotton with it. Careful calculations were made, and it was found that if a man were to lift a cable about as thick as his thigh and 60 feet long, it would nearly equal the fly's feat of strength.

Even stronger than the house-fly was an earwig. A little cart was made for it out of cardboard, with four sections of a lead pencil for wheels, and two needles for axles. The earwig was harnessed to it by a piece of cotton, and the cart was loaded with one match. This was mere child's play, as the insect steed fairly raced along, dragging its cart behind it. Another match was put on, and yet another, but still the earwig found no difficulty in dragging its load. At last, when eight matches had been put on, it did seem to have to make an effort to drag the cart. Think of a horse, though, trying to draw a load of eight huge beams like those we calculated a man would have to carry to equal the strength of a house-fly. Even if a cart could be got to take the eight beams it would need a dozen or more horses to draw it.

A yet more wonderful result was obtained by putting a penny on the cart, instead of the matches. At first that was too much for the earwig. Then the tray on which cart and 'horse' had been placed was tilted up slightly—not enough, though, to let the cart roll down by its own weight. The earwig tried again, and this time it managed to drag the loaded cart down to the bottom, though with an effort. The penny was weighed, more calculations were made, and it was found that the load drawn by one earwig was equal to at least 330 of the wooden beams we considered in the last experiment. Just think what a load that would be!

Even an earwig, though, is not to be compared with a beetle for strength. Experiments made with a common black-beetle proved that it could lift things two hundred times heavier than itself. Thus a man weighing 14 stone 4 lbs. would have to lift a weight of 400,000 lbs. if his strength was equal to the beetle's.

A grasshopper, too, has the most amazing strength for jumping. If we had anything like the same power, in proportion to our height, it would be quite easy for us to leap over St. Paul's Cathedral.

So perhaps, in another sense, the truest thing you can say of a delicate, weak person is that he has not got the strength of a fly!

DOROTHEA CLAYTON.

THE OUTWITTING OF OBASH.

ONE day a hippopotamus at a big Zoological Gardens escaped from his den. Early in the morning, before the Gardens were opened to the public, an excited keeper came running to the Superintendent, exclaiming, 'Oh, sir, Obash has got loose!'

The Superintendent hurried out of his house, and, sure enough, there was Obash coming down the long walk. His enormous mouth was twisted into such a vicious-looking grin that the Superintendent feared he meant mischief. The keeper tried to induce the animal to go 'home' by coaxing him with sweet hay. But though Obash munched the hay held out to him, he would not follow it into his den. What was to be done?

Then a happy thought came to the Superintendent, who knew that when a hippopotamus is angry he makes straight for the object of his wrath, with no regard for possible consequences to himself. There was a keeper named X——, whom for some reason Obash particularly disliked, and would run at whenever he appeared. To this man the Superintendent now appealed.

'X——,' he said, 'you can help us if you will. Throw open the paddock; show yourself to Obash at the end of the path, and run for the gate.'

As he spoke, the Superintendent slipped a bank note into the man's hand. X—— looked at the note, then peeped through the trees at his dangerous foe. The bank note prevailed. He stepped out into the middle of the path, with a cry of defiance.

'Obash! Obash!' he called.

The hippopotamus, recognising the voice of the person he hated, roared horribly, wheeled round, and made a rush at the keeper.

Running for his life, with the huge, furious beast at his heels, X—— dashed through the gate into the paddock, then over the railings. He had a narrow escape, for Obash was close to his coat-tails.

Other keepers were in readiness. Hastily they closed the gate, and Obash was again safe in his own quarters.

E. D.

"The hippopotamus made a rush at the keeper."

"'How have you come here? . . . When did you escape?'"

HELD TO RANSOM.

By V. M. Methley.

(Concluded from page 386.)

THE figure was that of a man, walking slowly and with apparent difficulty, and leading by the bridle a heavily-laden donkey. He was covered from head to foot by a hooded garment of brownish camel's-hair, and he walked with dragging feet, like an old or very weary man. From time to time, he glanced backward, or from side to side, as though fearing pursuit.

Dick glanced at Achmet, and saw that a sudden light glittered in the Moor's black eyes. Without a word, he spurred on his horse and the boys followed.

But their donkeys had a fit of their race's habitual sulkiness and obstinacy; nothing would induce them to keep within a measurable distance of Achmet's fine Arab. He entirely outstripped them, and reached the solitary traveller far ahead of the boys.

So it happened that Dick and Sandy saw from some little distance the amazing thing which happened.

Achmet's voice came back to them, as he hailed the stranger, ordering him peremptorily to stop.

At first, the man seemed to hesitate; then he turned, with one hand on the crupper of his beast, and faced the pursuer defiantly, with head thrown back. The boys could see that he spoke, but caught no words.

Achmet was within a yard or two of the traveller by now, and he had swung round his musket, so that it rested threateningly across his knee; he leant forward, speaking peremptorily, with angry gestures.

Then, of a sudden, his manner changed, as though by a miracle; a cry broke from him as he flung himself hastily from his horse. Dick and Sandy stared in utter bewilderment; could it be true that Achmet, that exceedingly dignified and superior person, was actually on his knees in the sand beside a grimy beggar-man, kissing his hands, speaking rapidly and excitedly.

As the boys drew nearer, they caught scraps of what he said.

'Is it indeed you . . . ah, how can I believe such happiness . . . you yourself! . . . but how have you come here? . . . when did you escape? Tell me, Sidi, tell me . . .'

The other man answered, and, with a thrill of surprise, Dick realised that both were speaking in English. 'The tribe was summoned to fight for Mulai; I was left with but few to guard me—and I took the chance. That was nearly a month ago . . . I have the treasure . . .'

Suddenly Dick and Sandy looked at each other; simultaneously, they scrambled down from their donkeys. For, in that instant, they understood.

As they came up, the traveller looked at them perplexedly. He was a tall man, and very thin, with a skin brown as that of a native. But his hair, from which the hood had slipped back, was fair, and his eyes rather startlingly blue.

He spoke slowly, still in English: 'Who are these boys, Achmet?'

The Moor was on his feet, his dark eyes flashing with excitement. 'Ah, Sidi, can you not guess?' he cried. 'Look at them . . . yes, look at them carefully . . .'

The man came forward, and stood staring down into the boys' faces. The expression of his own changed, and he pressed one hand over his eyes for a moment, then stared again. 'It can't be . . .' he said slowly, as though reasoning with himself. 'It . . . can't be, you know . . . And yet . . . how is it that they have Celeste's eyes . . . Celeste's look . . .'

At the sound of that name, Dick could restrain himself no longer. 'It's because she was our Mother!' he cried. 'Oh, Father, Father, it's us . . . it's really us!'

The journey to Rabat, whence they could most easily take steamer to England, needs no particular description. Indeed, there is very little more to say at all.

The torn-out pages from the end of the brown book had contained a description of the treasure's hiding-place, written down from memory by Thomas Jesmond. These pages Captain Harland had kept when he sent the book home to his sons.

There was just a little disappointment for Dick and Sandy in the knowledge that, after all, they had not been the ones to find the treasure and redeem their father. But that was more than balanced by the thought that, since he was already free, there was no ransom to pay, and that the store of queer, old-fashioned money would serve many a useful purpose, even after the share was deducted, which Achmet accepted so reluctantly.

'And besides . . .' Captain Harland said, as they stood on the deck of the *Essadir*, and watched Morocco fading into the sunset: 'I can't be sorry that you came, in spite of everything. Because if you hadn't . . . well, I might never have known quite what these sons of mine were worth.' V. M. Methley.

THE END.

THE TRUE STORY OF CASABIANCA.

WHO does not know that poem by Mrs. Hemans beginning with 'The boy stood on the burning deck'?

But perhaps not every one who knows the poem is aware that Casabianca was a real person. The following is said to be his true story.

He was a Corsican, and came of a good old family. His father, Luce de Casabianca, went to sea at a very early age, and served in the French Navy from boyhood until his death. During the American Revolution, in which the French took part, he showed great heroism. In course of time, Luce de Casabianca became a captain, and was placed in charge of the warship *Orient*, which was one of the vessels engaged in the naval battle of Aboukir.

The French Admiral was killed early in this fight and Captain Casabian a was suddenly called upon to take his place as Commander of the French Fleet. Almost immediately afterwards the new Commander was severely wounded in the head. Invited to surrender, he refused to do so, saying that he preferred to go down with his ship. Even when the *Orient* took fire he would not leave her.

'And I will stay with my father,' said his little ten-year-old son, the hero of the well-known poem.

'Save yourself,' said the father, 'and live for your mother.'

But the boy's reply to this was to fling his arms around the dying man in a tight and tender embrace. Probably, had time permitted, the young Casabianca

would have been removed by force, but the fire had reached the powder-magazine, and the unfortunate ship was blown into the air. Thus father and son passed together out of this world. E. DYKE.

THE HIDING-PLACE.

THE Battle of Marston Moor was over. The King's army was utterly routed, and for three weeks Sir Richard Garnet had lain hidden in the woods which surrounded his castle while the Roundhead soldiery searched for him.

Three people only knew of his hiding-place—his wife, his little daughter, and Peter, the old serving-man. These three had ventured forth with the food which had kept him alive. In this little Margery had been most successful, for who would suspect a little maid with a basket of woodland flowers, attended by an elderly serving-man?

But at last several days had passed without sign of the troops, and Sir Richard had crept forth and entered his castle, hoping for a good night's rest, a good meal, and a good mount, and then, hey! once more for the King's Standard.

He had had food and a long rest, and was preparing to ride away when old Peter entered the small oak chamber overlooking the courtyard, hot and out of breath.

'Sir! Master!' he exclaimed, 'there are troops without the gate!'

Sir Richard sprang to his feet. 'What are they? Who rides with them?'

'Colonel Devine and Captain Archer, sir.'

'Captain Archer!' repeated the lady gladly. 'Then thou art safe! He is thy friend, Dick!'

'Nay, sweet one,' replied her husband. 'He hath gone over to the Roundheads, and doubtless hath been compelled to come because he knoweth this house and every yard of the country as well as I myself.'

'Then they will take thee!' Lady Muriel looked round in terror as the spurs and swords clanked. 'Dick, hide thyself! The Monk's chamber!' She sprang to the wall and pressed a spring. The paneling shot back, showing a tiny room.

But he shook his head. 'Tis useless, sweet wife. 'Twould be but to be caught as a rat in a trap.'

Little Margery, born and brought up in troublous times, had listened to her parents with an understanding far beyond her years. Now, springing up, she left the chamber and flew down the staircase.

'Captain Archer,' she cried, running out into the sunshine and grasping his hand, 'Captain Archer, hast come to see my father? He sorely needs a friend.'

Lady Muriel, through the open window above heard the high childish voice, and gave one sob, 'Dick! the child! She hath not understood!'

But Margery's voice continued: 'Dost know that for three weeks he hath lain in the forest, and,' proudly, 'I have carried him food! I can guide thee to the place.'

'Hush! hush, child!' exclaimed the Captain hoarsely, 'tis not for a child to betray her father's——'

A stern voice checked him.

'What is this? Methinks Captain Archer is a traitor to the cause.'

With a suppressed groan Archer turned away, while Colonel Devine, in the gentlest tone he could summon, said, 'Lead on, child. We—ah—we will take thy father to a safer place.'

Again Margery's hand slipped into the Captain's, holding with an unusually tight clasp, and he was bound to follow her lead. But though she danced along at his side chattering bravely, she cast many a furtive, frightened glance at the old Ironside.

Captain Archer's position was hateful to him. It had been bad enough to hunt his friend like a criminal, but it was ten thousand times worse to take advantage of the innocence of that friend's little child. But heedless of his silence Margery babbled on.

'Oh, it hath been a terrible time! We have been sorely anxious. But now all will be well. Dear father will be quite safe now.'

The soldier made no reply, and at last the little girl dropped his hand and sprang forward. 'See, here it is! Is it not a good hiding-place? For three weeks he hath lain here!'

She parted the bushes and showed the opening to a small underground cave.

The Colonel pushed her aside roughly and entered with drawn sword while the men closed round, but except for some straw which still bore the impression of a man's figure, there was nothing to be seen.

'Gone!' he exclaimed. 'He hath escaped!' Then suddenly his suspicion aroused, and he turned his furious face towards the child, who shrank against her father's friend. 'Thou hast deceived me! Thou hast lied! Thou saidst thou wouldst guide me to thy father!'

The blood of a noble race ran in Margery's veins, and though sorely frightened, she answered, 'I said not I would guide thee to my father!' The angry face terrified her, but she kept on bravely: 'I said I would show thee the hiding-place where he hath lain for three weeks, and—and 'tis here.'

'Then where is he now?' he demanded in a terrifying voice.

'I think,' she began tremulously, 'I think he is on the back of fleet Brown Bess on the way to the King.'

For a minute Colonel Devine looked as if he would strike her to the ground with his sword, but, man of iron though he was, he did not war on children. He dashed it into its scabbard. 'Outwitted!—and by a child—a babe!'

Gnawing his lip savagely, he left with his men at his heels.

Captain Archer turned to Margery. 'See, child, I will take thee home. It is not safe for thee to be abroad. Hasten!'

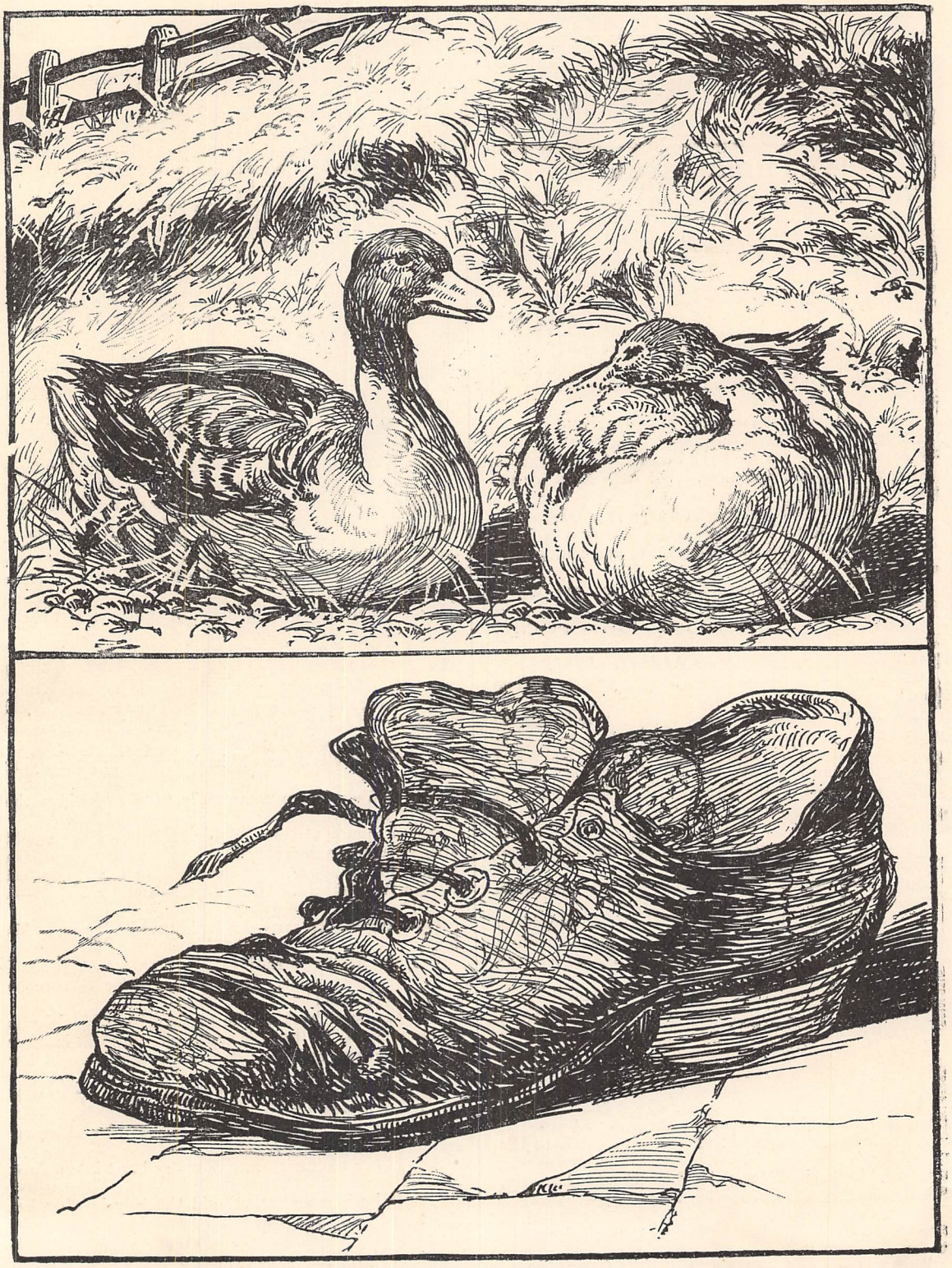
The two sped back to the castle. Lady Muriel was looking forth in terrible anxiety. Captain Archer sprang forward, and, dropping on his knee, caught her hand.

'Forgive me, Lady Muriel! A soldier's first duty is to obey—but—thank God thy husband hath escaped!' He pressed his lips to her fingers, kissed little Margery, and hastened after his Colonel.

Safe in her mother's arms, Margery burst into a flood of tears.

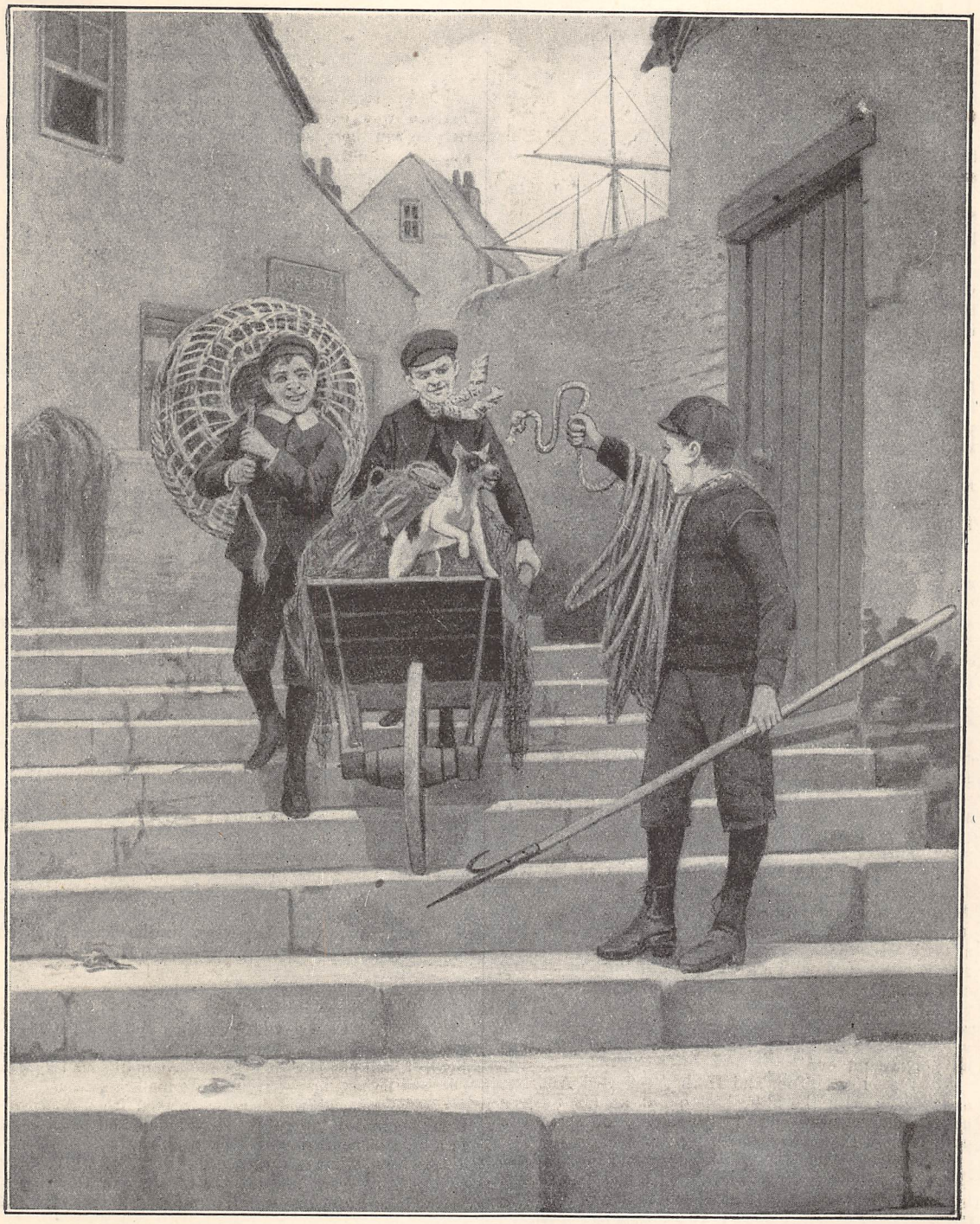
'Hush, hush, sweetheart!' said the lady holding her closely. 'There is no need for tears now. Thou hast saved thy father and he hath left thee a message: "Tell my little Margery, I have the sweetest little daughter in all the land, and the bravest!"'

CATHERINE E. THONGER.



A PAGE OF PICTURE PUZZLES.

Above—A Dinner for Mr. Fox: where is he?
Below—The Old Woman who lived in her Shoe: find her and her Children.



"Tom flourished the end of the rope within an inch of the puppy's nose."

THE TOWN STEPS.

THE Superintendent of Osborough Sunday School was a trifle out of breath. He stood in the middle of a small side-street, grasping two wriggling boys by their coat-collars.

'So you tied the dog to that post and pelted him with

mud and stones, did you? Why? Because he didn't seem to belong to anybody? You heartless young ruffians! I'm ashamed to think you belong to the Sunday school. However, you need not trouble yourselves to come to the treat on Saturday, for you are both disqualified. Now go!'

With a parting shake he released the sulky pair, and turned to speak to a third boy, who stood clasping in his arms a trembling fox-terrier pup.

'I was glad to see you go to the rescue, Andrew,' he said kindly. 'You did well. What is to become of the poor little beast?'

'May I keep him, sir—if nobody comes for him?'

'Certainly, if your father allows it. I am sure you will treat him kindly. But now, about the treat on Saturday, Andrew. The tea is to be on the beach, as usual, you know, and I want a boy I can trust to help me.'

Andrew looked up eagerly.

'Will you undertake to bring all the crockery down from the Parish-room? You can have my wheelbarrow for the job, but it will take you some time, as of course you will have to go round by the road. Start early, and be very careful not to break anything.'

The Superintendent passed on, and the two bad boys reappeared from the alley up which they had fled.

'Get out with you—toadying to the teacher!' yelled Tom.

'Don't break the tea-cups, Andy!' jeered Herbert.

Andrew only clasped the puppy tighter and made a rush for home. Once safely away from his tormentors, the little dog soon recovered himself, and met with a kindly welcome from the good-natured fisherman and his wife. He shared Andrew's supper, and finally curled up to sleep on a bundle of old sprat-nets in the corner of the kitchen.

'That's a gentleman's dog, that is, I should think likely,' the fisherman remarked as he looked the puppy over. 'He has good points about him, and he must ha' cost a tidy bit of money. You must inquire around, Andy, and find out who's his owner.'

Andrew made several inquiries at the different hotels and lodging-houses in Osborough, but until the day of the school treat arrived he had entirely failed to find the puppy's master.

The important business of moving the parish tea-things down to the beach occupied the whole of Andrew's mind on Saturday. He borrowed the barrow in the morning and presented himself in excellent time at the Parish-room. The woman in charge helped him to pile in his load, with a great deal of advice to be very careful. 'Don't you get running and playing about with that,' she remarked severely. 'There were two boys round asking for you this morning—rough, ill-behaved young louts. If you get along with them you'll be having the lot over.'

'I expect it was Tom and Herby,' reflected Andrew, and, struck with the idea, he stopped at his father's cottage on the way and piled a bundle of sprat-nets on the top of the precious crockery.

'They will think I'm going fishing and forget about the treat,' he muttered hopefully. He had just turned his barrow up the main street when a notice in the post-office window caught his eye:

'LOST!

'A Fox-terrier Puppy, white with black markings. Answers to the name of Jellicoe. Whoever returns the same to Mrs. Fitzgerald, 18 The Terrace, will receive ten shillings reward.'

Andrew let down the barrow on to its legs with a sudden thud and a jingle of china. Ten shillings! He had never owned half such a sum in his life. The Terrace was over a mile away. Would there be time to run there and back before taking the barrow all round by the road to the beach?

'Hi, Jellicoe! Jellicoe!' he called to the puppy, which ran to his side and licked his fingers.

'He knows his name and all!' cried Andrew excitedly.

It settled his wavering resolution. Pushing the barrow back into his father's yard, he caught up the puppy and ran as fast as he could to the Terrace. It took longer than he thought, and Jellicoe was heavy to carry. It seemed hours before a smart parlour-maid answered the door. She glanced rather scornfully at the shabbily-dressed boy and the muddy dog.

'No, that is not ours; ours is a long-haired one.' And she slammed the door in Andrew's face.

The return journey seemed three miles instead of one, and Jellicoe—who answered equally well to Drake or Nelson, or even Tirpitz—was heavier than ever. Time had passed by with terrible swiftness, and when Andrew, disappointed and conscience-stricken, hurried past the post-office, the hands of the clock pointed to four. Four! And he had promised to have the tea-things on the beach by a quarter-past. It would take half an hour to go round by the road: he must take the barrow down the town steps. The old stone steps, as old as Osborough itself, were the usual short cut to the beach but to wheel a barrow-load of china down them was neither a safe nor an easy task, as Andrew found.

He had lowered the front wheel cautiously over the first step when the puppy gave a nervous yelp, and nearly upset the barrow by springing into the end of it. At the same moment Tom and Herby rushed out of a side-alley, laden the one with a gigantic lobster-pot and the other with a boat-hook and a coil of rope.

'Hullo, Andy! Been and lost the tea-things?'

'My word! Isn't he late?'

'The teacher'll let you have it—you'll get chucked out!'

'Get out of my road, will you?' said Andrew angrily, as Herby jolted his arm and Tom flourished the end of the rope within an inch of the puppy's nose, making him bark furiously.

Chink! chink! went the cups, as the barrow jolted heavily down the steep stone steps.

'Listen to him smashing them!' yelled Herby, twisting up a corner of the sprat-net.

Andrew blundered on faster to avoid him, and Tom caught at the barrow-wheel with his boat-hook. Tottering and stumbling, Andrew might yet have righted himself, had not Herby, on a sudden malicious impulse, clapped the lobster-pot right on to his head.

Crash! smash! the barrow escaped from Andrew's hands, bounded down three steps alone, and overturned in a hideous confusion of broken china.

'Andrew, what is the meaning of this? I thought that you, at least, I could trust.' It was the Superintendent, hurrying up the steps to look for his messenger.

Andrew stood speechless and trembling, but his defence was taken up by a strange gentleman, who in coming up the steps with his little girl had seen the accident.

'It was that other boy's fault,' he remarked, pointing out the grinning Herbert with his stick. 'Both those two were worrying him, and trying to upset the barrow. If I were you, sir, I should——'

He was interrupted by a delighted shriek from the little girl. 'Tim! Tim! Oh, Father, I have found Tim!'

The puppy was licking her face with yelps and barks of joy, while she sat on the steps and hugged him. The Superintendent explained how the dog had been found and rescued, and Andrew was transformed from a disgraced criminal into a perfect hero in the eyes of Tim's owner. As for Tom and Herby, they both slipped quietly away.

'Well, my boy,' said the stranger kindly, 'I should like to give you some reward for your kindness to my little girl's dog, and it seems the best thing I can do is to replace these broken tea-things. Here is something for yourself as well.' He slipped a shilling into Andrew's delighted hand. 'Now take this note to the china-shop in the High Street; and you had better take your barrow for the new load—but don't try another short cut down the town steps!' D. M. P. S.

VERY CROSS!

YOU really ought to *like* the rain
That beats upon the window-pane,
And wets the grass, and breaks the flowers,
And pours and pours and pours for hours;
At least, that is what Nursie says,
But perhaps it's her '*contrairy*' ways—
Like telling you you should eat fat,
And crusts, and stupid things like that:
For *I* don't like the rain a bit—
I wonder what *you* think of it!

ETHEL TALBOT.

THE HOLE IN THE CROWN.

MANY years ago there reigned at Lucknow (by permission of the British East India Company) a king named Nussir.

He was a person of uncertain temper, sometimes very gracious, sometimes quite the reverse. Several of his courtiers were Europeans: his European barber was an especial favourite. Others were natives, and one of these was the Rajah Buktawir Singh, general of his Majesty's forces.

Buktawir was styled 'the General,' but 'Chief Officer of Police' would have been a more accurate title, for his troops did little more than police duty.

The General and the European barber were continually cracking jokes and saying foolish things to amuse the King, who, as a rule, delighted in such jests. Yet Buktawir was by no means a silly man: the natives looked up to him as a person of much distinction; he was also rich. The Nawab, or Prime Minister, Rooshun, was envious of the General, but he took care to conceal this feeling.

The King and his suite often visited one of the numerous country palaces in the neighbourhood of Lucknow, in order to enjoy some barbarous 'sport.' One day Nussir and his attendants, tired of watching animals tearing each other to pieces, retired for refreshment to a little refectory close by the park in which they were. Here, over a light repast, Nussir was very merry. Buktawir, as usual, fell in with the royal humour, laughing at his master's poor jokes, and pretending to enjoy them immensely.

When the time came to leave the refectory, the King of course rose first. He was dressed in his favourite style, that of an English gentleman. As he moved towards the door, he thrust his right hand into his London hat, which he held aloft and twirled round on his thumb. This being a habit of his, nobody took any notice.

This hat had doubtless been a good one to begin with, but as it had so often been treated roughly it is not surprising that on this occasion the King's thumb came out through the top. With a laugh he turned to his courtiers, who laughed also, as in duty bound.

It was at this moment, when all seemed serene, that Buktawir imperilled his life by an unlucky remark. 'There's a hole in your Majesty's crown,' he said in Hindustani, meaning to be witty.

Then the storm broke. Nussir was very sensitive about his crown, the reason of this being that his own family—even his father—had tried to exclude him from the throne in favour of his brother. Yet at another time, with the King in a different mood, no offence would have been taken.

The expression of Nussir's face changed: he frowned wrathfully. Turning to one of his English friends he said, 'Did you hear the traitor?'

Without waiting for a reply, he shouted to the Captain of the Body-guard, who was a European. 'Arrest this man immediately!' he ordered in a voice husky with rage. Then, addressing the Prime Minister, he said, 'Go, Rooshun, and cut off his head.'

Everybody was struck dumb with surprise and consternation. No one wanted poor Buktawir to be executed—except Rooshun.

This man was the first to find his tongue. 'Your Majesty's commands shall be obeyed,' he said, advancing towards Buktawir, who stood in the attitude of obedience, with bent head and extended, meekly-folded hands.

'Buktawir is *my* prisoner,' said the Captain, leading him off before Rooshun could touch him, and giving his European friends a look which plainly said, 'Do *your* part; I shall do all *I* can for this poor fellow.'

As the General was led out, Nussir flung his hat down on the ground, and stamped on it.

'What would the King of England do to the man who insulted him thus?' he asked one of his English attendants.

'Like your Majesty,' was the reply, 'he would have him arrested; then he would be tried, and dealt with according to the verdict.'

'So will *I* do!' exclaimed Nussir, forgetting that he had given the order for the offender's instant execution.

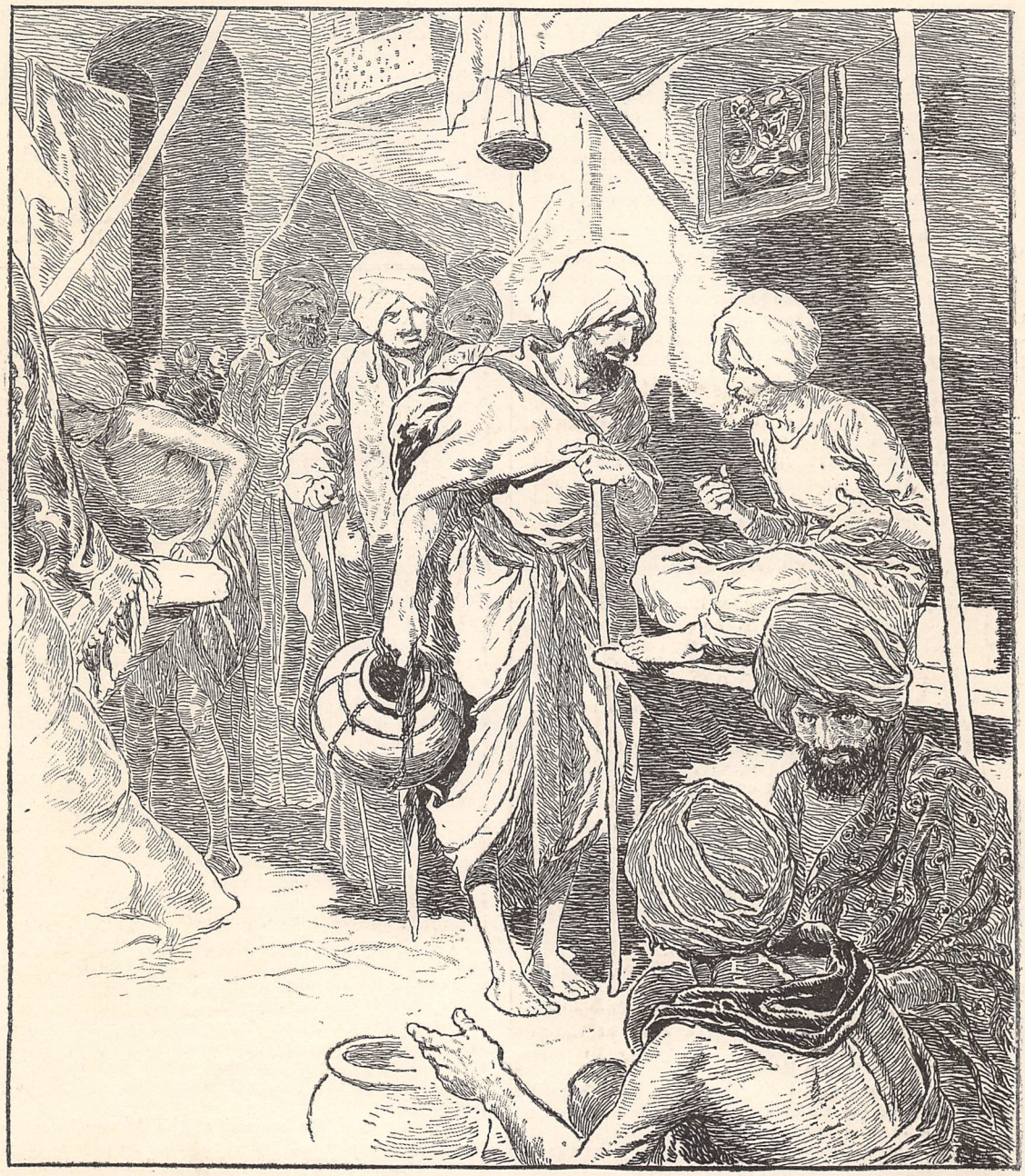
'I will inform Rooshun of your Majesty's commands,' said the gentleman; and he hurried out on his merciful errand.

But the King was still furiously angry. 'Buktawir's head shall be off before it is dark,' he said to the barber, as he mounted his elephant for the return to Lucknow.

He seemed calmer by the time he reached the palace, and said that Buktawir should not die until a thorough inquiry had been made into the matter.

(*Concluded on page* 402.)

"'Buktawir is *my* prisoner,' said the Captain."



"'Another attack on the rice-stores this morning!'"

THE HOLE IN THE CROWN.

(*Concluded from page* 399.)

WHEN the Europeans of Nussir's household left him for the night, they visited Buktawir in his prison. This was an outhouse in the neighbourhood of the palace, where he was guarded by two native sentries. The only furniture the place contained was a charpoy: that is, a rough sort of bedstead—just a framework of wood raised on four short legs. Usually it had a mat or mattress, but there was nothing of the kind here. The disgraced officer had been stripped of his fine clothes, and his only garment was a scanty piece of cloth.

He said he knew that *he* must die, but he begged his English friends to protect his family. He gave them a signet ring, containing a large, very valuable emerald.

'I have preserved this one jewel,' he said; 'they have taken all the rest. Oh, save my family from torture!—and should the King spare their lives but seize their property, perhaps you will sell this for them?'

With tears in their eyes, the Englishmen promised to do everything in their power.

Meanwhile, the Captain of the Bodyguard had been to the English Resident, entreating him to interfere on Buktawir's behalf. At first, the Resident said he could not do so. When, however, all Buktawir's wives and children, and his old, bed-ridden father, were arrested and thrown into prison, the Resident sent for the Prime Minister, and told him that the English Company would hold him responsible for whatever might happen to this innocent family. Wholesale torture and murder *could* not, *should* not, be permitted under English rule.

So frightened was Rooshun by the stern words of 'the great Sahib,' that even *he* thought it well to be on the safe side, and to allow not only Buktawir's family, but also Buktawir himself, to live. It would never do to offend the English! Thus, at that evening's council, every voice pleaded for Buktawir.

'Very well,' said the King, at last. 'Let the traitor live. But he shall lose his property, and be shut up in a wild-beast cage for the rest of his life. He shall be banished, and never come to Lucknow again.'

* * * * *

That year there was a great dearth of provisions in Lucknow. Rice was scarce; all kinds of food were very dear. Discontent was the consequence. There were riots. When the King rode out, people bothered him with petitions. He became very tired of these stories of starving families and wicked speculators.

A year had passed since Buktawir's disgrace, and still the riots went on.

'There must be something wrong,' said Nussir, one day; 'I have never known such a state of things before.'

'The crops——' began Rooshun.

'Nonsense!' interrupted Nussir. 'The crops are all right. What do *you* think about it?' he asked of the tutor whom he employed to teach him English.

'I think, your Majesty,' replied the tutor, 'that there must be some mismanagement in the bazaars. It should be looked into.'

'Some of us will go this evening, and look into it,' said Nussir. 'We will go to the city in disguise, like the Caliph in Bagdad. That will be great fun!'

It was a risky thing to do, but the King would have his way. He, two European members of his household, and Rooshun, disguised themselves, and mingled with the oily, steaming crowd. Nothing particular happened until they drew near to a money-changer. Then Nussir and his attendants heard a merchant say, 'Another attack on the rice-stores this morning, Nahadub!'

'Yes,' said the money-changer, in a gloomy tone.

'Things were different when the Rajah Buktawir Singh was the King's minister,' said the other. '*He* kept the bazaars in order.'

'He did, indeed,' assented the money-changer. 'I wish he were here now! But these are bad times!'

Nussir returned to his palace, thinking deeply. Two months later, Buktawir was in his old place at court. The next harvest was abundant, and 'the General' was in greater favour than ever. E. DYKE.

THE CONQUEROR.

THIS is a story of a New Jersey farmer, who conquered, first himself, and then his enemy. He destroyed his enemy in the best possible way, by turning him into a friend.

The farmer owned a large number of hens. He usually kept them shut up, but one spring he let them run in his yard, after he had clipped their wings so that they should not fly away. One day, when he came home to dinner, he was told that a neighbour had been there, in a towering passion, to say that the hens had got into his garden, and that he had killed some of them and flung them over into their owner's yard.

The farmer naturally felt very angry, for he had greatly valued his beautiful hens. He determined to sue the neighbour, or in some other way to get redress. However, he sat down and ate his dinner as calmly as he could. By the time he had finished his meal he had cooled down. He asked himself whether he could not devise a better plan than to fight with his neighbour about the hens, and thus make for himself a bitter, lasting enemy. He decided to try another way, which, he felt sure, would be a better one.

After dinner, the good man went to see the neighbour, whom he found in his garden, chasing one of the trespassing hens and trying to kill it with a big stick. When he saw the farmer he shrieked out at him in a fury.

'I will kill every one of your hens!' he said. 'In all my life I have never been treated so badly! My garden is ruined!'

'I am very sorry,' said the farmer. 'Indeed, I did not wish to injure you, but evidently I made a great mistake in letting out my hens. I apologise, and am willing to pay you six times the amount of the damage.'

The neighbour did not know what to make of this. He looked up at the sky, then down to the ground, then at the farmer, then at the stick which he held in his hand, then at the poor, frightened hen he had been pursuing.

'Tell me now the amount of the damage,' went on the farmer, 'and I will pay it to you. Ask for as much as you please, and I promise that my hens shall trouble you no more. I am not going to lose the good-will of my neighbours if I can help it. I can't afford to quarrel with them, about hens or anything else.'

'*I am a great fool*,' said the neighbour. 'I ask your forgiveness. The damage is not worth talking about, and it is I who ought to compensate you.' E. D.

A HANDFUL OF HOME-MADE TOYS.

WITH a few odds-and-ends like old cotton-reels, bits of wood, cardboard, and string, it is quite easy to make toys for yourself; and they have this advantage, that he who makes can mend, and it is no serious loss to break them. Here are a few examples.

First it will be shown how to make a toy roundabout for two operators, one at each end, as fig. 1; and then how, by making a slight alteration, the same toy can be worked entirely at one end.

For the base, get a piece of board, twenty-two inches long, seven inches wide, three-eighths of an inch thick. Then collect three empty cotton-reels of equal size; cut two wooden pegs that will allow the reels to revolve freely on them; make a hole at each end of the board, about one inch from the edge and on the centre line; fix in the wooden pegs, drop two of the reels on to them, and cut the pegs so that the heads are exactly level with the tops of the reels.

Make a similar hole in the centre of the board, the wooden peg in this case being about three inches long. On the reel which is to occupy the centre, fix a thick cardboard circle as at A, four inches in diameter. This of course has a hole in the centre for the wooden peg, B, to pass through. Now make a thin wooden arm, C, eight and a half inches long, one end being large enough to take a hole that works loosely over the peg B, the other end tapering almost to a point. Drop this arm over the peg, and then a quarter of an inch or thereabouts above the arm fix a wooden cap, D, three-quarters of an inch in diameter; or, if it is obtainable, a thick rubber ring answers the purpose capitally. Two upright wooden pegs, E, about one and a quarter inches long, are put through holes made in the cardboard platform, A, while a small piece of wood like F, glued firmly on the under side of the card, will also take the ends of these pegs and keep them quite steady. Care must be taken, however, to place these two pegs in such a way that the arm, C, can move freely up and down.

Cut two pieces of thick cardboard seven inches long, two and a half inches wide, or a little wider if the reels stand more than one and a half inches high. Rule a margin lengthways half-inch from one edge, round off the opposite edge as shown at G, and make a small hole through the card about half-way up from the margin. The margin should be cut through at the centre, and then bent so that one flap comes on each side, as at H. These flaps are fixed upon the board on each side of the central reel, about four inches away.

Now find the middle of a piece of thin smooth cord about six feet long, and twist it from the middle five or six times round the centre reel. Then take the ends through the holes in the stiff cardboard curves, fasten them to the untouched reels, and wind up all the slack. Cut out a thick cardboard, or thin wooden, horse and rider; put a wooden ring or button, K, having a hole in the centre to fit the arm, B, on each side of the animal; pierce through the cardboard, making one continuous hole, so that the blunt point of the arm can be inserted at either side. With thumb and finger turn one of the end reels to see which way the arm moves, and then fix on the animal. The arm will take the animal round, and, guided by the raised curves, will cause it to clear the stretched cord and drop immediately after.

If desired, a cardboard fence can be placed alongside the cord, as shown at one end of fig. 2, terminating at the cardboard curve, to which it can be fixed. When all the cord has been wound on one reel, the animal can be reversed on the arm, and a second operator situated at the other end of the board can wind the cord on to his reel.

Now for the slight alteration to work the toy at one end only. Take off the cord, and use another piece not more than four feet long. Twist it four or five times round the centre reel, take both ends through one cardboard curve, and tie them together, making an endless band. Wind the slack cord round the reel, which must then be placed over the peg. If the cord is too loose, lessen the length just a trifle, and when it stretches quite tight, the arm can be worked continuously in one direction.

A toy man with a wheel-barrow can be made out of very simple material. A match-box will do nicely for the barrow, either the entire box, or only the tray portion, being used. Midway on each side of it fix a cardboard support, as A, for a spindle to work in. Cut two circles of thick cardboard (B) about two inches in diameter, and make a hole in each, but not through the centre; measure a quarter of an inch towards the circumference from the centre (in any direction, of course, as it is a circle), and there make the hole as in B. Fix these circles on the ends of a spindle or bar that works freely in the bearings, A, and when fixing them take care to have one end of the spindle through the hole above the centre of one circle (see dotted position in the circle, B), while the other end is fixed in the hole *below* the centre of the opposite circle. The spindle should be long enough to allow about a quarter of an inch space between the sides of the box and the wheels, and a quarter of an inch or so should project beyond the wheels to take a cork or wooden cap, which must be fixed on the spindle and against the wheels. It is well to bear in mind that *the spindle moves* in the bearings—not the wheels on the spindle. Care should be taken that the wheels are very firmly fixed on the spindles, as that is the most important feature in making a success of the toy.

Two thin wooden shafts about three inches long are then fixed under the box, and a toy wooden man is fastened by the hands to the shafts. The simplest way to make the little man is to cut the body, the head, the arms, and the legs separately, and then fix them all together with wire, or with canvas glued on, if you want him to be flexible. When pushed along, or pulled by a short length of cord, both the barrow and the man sway from side to side with the rotation of the wheels.

Our next toy is a strangely-behaved one. Pressure on the head or on the shoulders causes our jumping doll to spring into the air, and if held slantingly it will leap over a box or other obstacle. How is it done?

The method of making the toy is shown by the illustration (fig. 4). Through a reel, A, put a piece of clock-spring, B, eight inches long; overlap the ends about one inch, and tie them firmly together with a length of cord or strong twine, C. Then twist the jointed portion into the hole in the reel, making it fit tightly with an extra layer of twine if necessary. On the reel fix a wooden or a cork body, D, and over the top of the body fix a skirt that will hide the spring. Then fix a suitable wooden or cardboard head on the body, put two arms upon the sides of the reel outside the skirt, and the toy is ready to jump.

A cotton-reel about one and a half inches long, and

shaped like A in fig. 5, will be the most important thing needed to make an acrobat. Bore a hole through the middle, at right angles to the usual one, and fix in two wooden rods, the upper one, B, about two and a half inches long; the lower, C, about one and a half inches. A piece of lead must be wrapped around the lower rod,

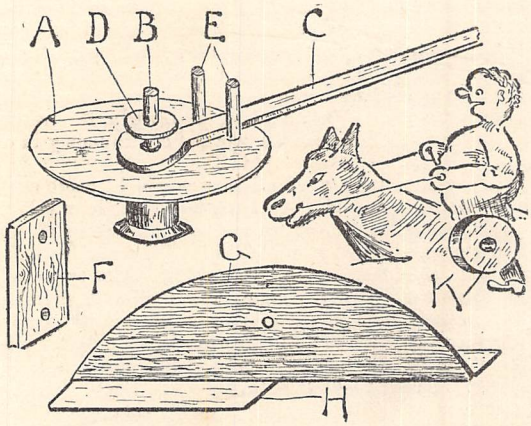


Fig. 1.—The Parts of a Toy Roundabout.

weighing from one and a half to two ounces: a small fishing weight would do. That ought to be quite sufficient weight, but extra will be required if the acrobat's figure is made too heavy.

Cut two thick cardboard circles, four inches in diameter, and make a hole through the centre of each to take a spindle or bar, two and a half inches long, that works freely in the reel. Fix the circles on in this way: put the spindle through the reel, and force two

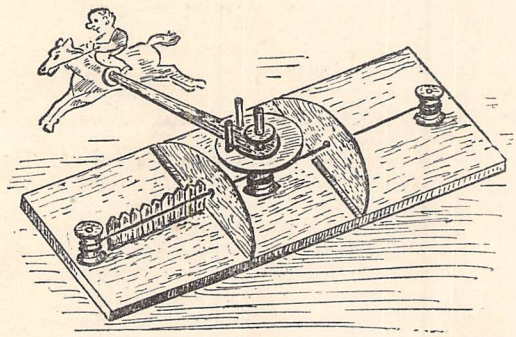


Fig. 2.—The Toy Roundabout at work.

pieces of newspaper on at each end of the spindle; then push on the cardboard circles, pressing them close against the pieces of newspaper that lie between them and the ends of the reel, and cap the ends of the spindle with two half-corks, so that the cardboard wheels are held firmly in their place. The newspaper must stick out beyond the edges of the circles. Let the glue or other fixative dry, then tear away the four pieces of newspaper, and there will be just sufficient play between

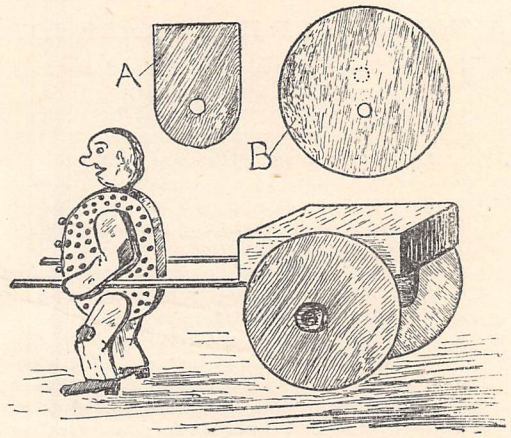


Fig. 3.—A Toy Man and Wheel-barrow.

the ends of the reel and the sides of the cardboard circles.

Fix a cork on the upper rod, then over the top of the cork put a piece of thin cloth which will fall all around and represent a dress. About the middle of the cork, tie the cloth on tightly with a short piece of cord; then

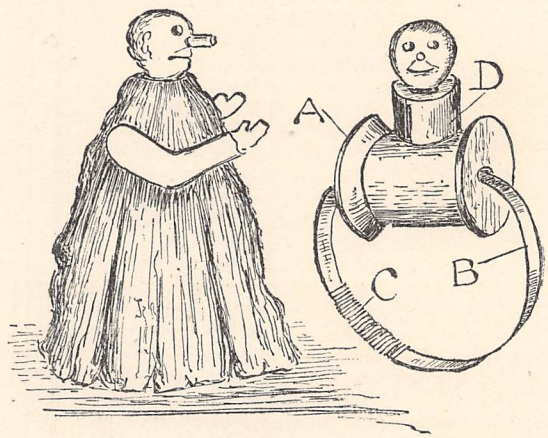


Fig. 4.—A Jumping Doll.

slightly above the waist-band bore a hole through the cork, and insert a short spindle that works loosely. Fasten a cardboard or wooden arm on each end, as at D, and add a small flag to one arm. Make a rough head that can be fixed to the body with a pin or very thin nail driven through from the top, and decorate with hair made by fluffing out some very coarse string.

When pushed along on a level table, or placed on a slanting surface—pieces of wood under the feet at one end of a table make a good incline—the acrobatic figure rocks backwards and forwards, but always returns to the top of the wheel because of the weighted rod beneath.

This is how to make a mechanical horse and cart. On a piece of cardboard four inches square rule two parallel lines, dividing the card into three spaces, the

middle portion being two inches wide and the sides one inch. Bend these sides downward, and one inch from each end cut holes as at A A in fig. 6, large enough to take spindles measuring half an inch in diameter. From the top front edge cut out a piece one inch long, half an inch wide, as at B, leaving three-quarters of an inch of card on each side of the opening. Then fix a piece of wood

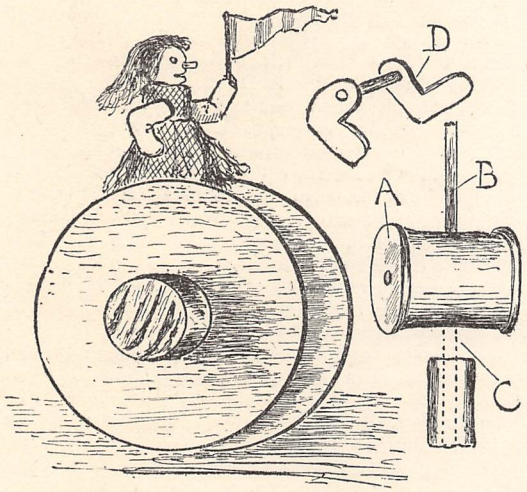


Fig. 5.—A Toy Acrobat.

in each end of the bent cardboard to form a very firm casing. The axles should be two and a half inches long, and half an inch in diameter, the front one having a wooden peg, projecting about half an inch, fixed in the centre as shown.

The seat is made from a wooden block, A, measuring

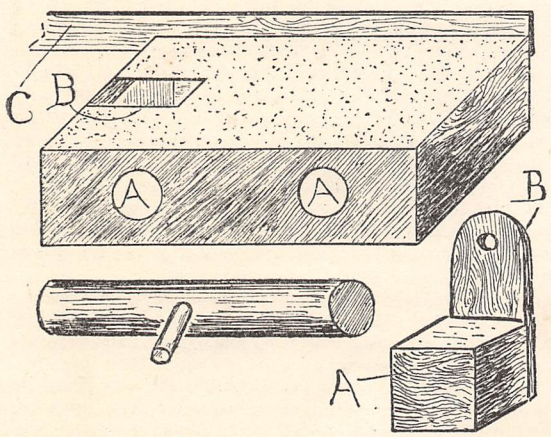


Fig. 6.—The parts of a Toy Horse and Cart.

about half an inch all ways, and two sides as B, one and and a half inches high.

The driver has a body of wood, a quarter of an inch thick; cardboard legs and arms, which are fixed on; and a wooden or cork head. A piece of quarter-inch wood, half an inch long, is fixed between the feet, a quarter of an inch or so protruding, as at A in fig. 7. This driver is hinged to the uprights, at the sides of the seat, by means of a wooden pin, which can be fixed

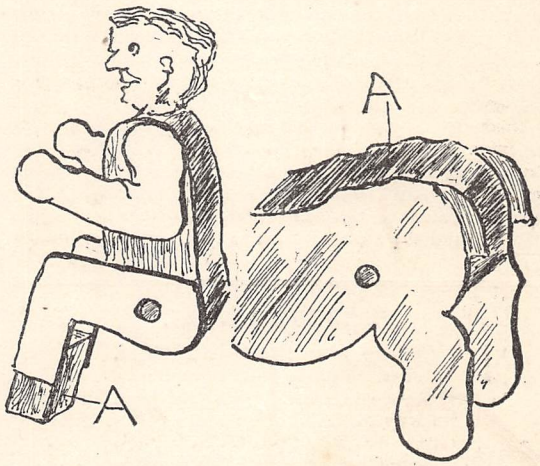


Fig. 7.—Driver. Fig. 8.—Part of horse.

either in the body of the driver or in the sides, B, of the seat.

Four solid wheels, one and three-quarter inches in diameter, are cut from cardboard or thin wood, and are nailed or screwed on to the ends of the thick axles. The seat with the driver attached is fixed at the back

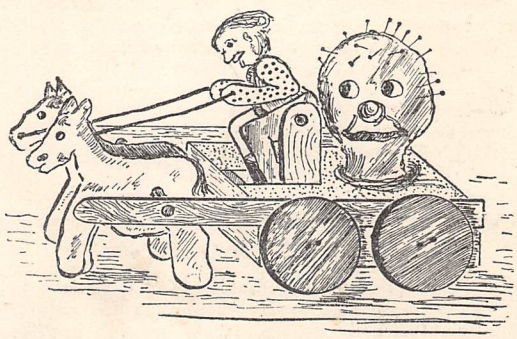


Fig. 9.—The Horse and Cart complete.

end of the opening, B, the feet of the driver falling into the hole.

Two wooden shafts, about six inches long, half an inch wide, are fixed on the sides of the carriage, as at C, in order to form a ridge. As these shafts come between the sides of the carriage and the wheels, a little extra attention should be given to the thickness of the shafts in case they prevent the wheels from turning freely.

Two separate cardboard horses, or other animals, two and a half inches to three inches long, one and three-quarter inches high, are fixed on each side of a piece of shaped wood about three-quarters of an inch thick, as at A in fig. 8. A hole made through the body somewhere above the hind legs works freely on a spindle that is

fixed in the shafts. A piece of string connects the horses' heads with the driver's hands; and here again there is need for carefulness, for the horses' hoofs must not touch the table or other surface upon which the toy stands. If they do, they must be trimmed down until they hang just clear of the table. At the same time it should be noticed that a slight shortening of the string which passes from the horses to the driver will raise the front legs, if the trimming process seems going too far. At the back portion of the cart a comical figure, a pin-cushion, or any other object can be fixed (fig. 9).

When the toy is pushed or pulled along, the peg on the front axle strikes the piece of wood projecting from the driver's feet, the arms are taken backward with the driver's body, and the horses' front legs are raised. The peg passes clear of the projection, the driver again falls forward, and the horses return to their first position.

J. C. Nelson.

PERSEVERANCE.

'I *WILL* come up!' a Coltsfoot said,
In his dark place underground;
'I will push, and grow, and lift my head
Till a way to the light I've found!'

Where his root lay hid was once a field,
And the ground was soft in Spring;
But since the workmen had come to build,
It was quite a different thing.

A heavy fence stood right in his way,
So he curved his scaly stalk;
And then he found, to his great dismay,
He was under a gravelled walk.

But between the pebbles he pushed with might,
And grew stronger every day,
Till at length he came to the air and light
At the edge of the trodden way.

Then it was easy; his bud was made,
And it opened now in an hour;
And people passing, in fur wraps, said:
'What a pretty yellow flower!'

Gerald Bull.

LITTLE MENAGERIES.

MOST people are fond of animals, and have a pet of some sort. Usually these pets are ordinary domestic animals like dogs and cats, or such harmless wild animals as are easily caught and tamed. But not a few people have a liking for wild animals, which are both troublesome and dangerous. Sometimes these people wish to study the strange ways of the animals themselves, but more often, I imagine, they keep the animals in captivity out of the sheer venturesomeness which goes with a love of sport. But, whatever the reason may be, we get in this way the beginnings of little menageries.

In bygone times it was not at all uncommon for noble people to make presents of wild animals to their friends. When Sir Richard Fanshawe was sent, in 1664, as our Ambassador to Spain, he was received with great honour in all the towns through which he passed on his way from Cadiz, where he landed, to Madrid. At Seville, for instance, the English merchants of Malaga gave him a very fine horse, which had cost them three hundred pounds. When he and Lady Fanshawe were leaving the city, the Count of Molina offered a young lion to Lady Fanshawe. This was rather a troublesome sort of present; but Lady Fanshawe was careful about declining it, because she knew that it was considered a very honourable one. 'I desired his Excellency's pardon that I did not accept it,' she says, 'saying I was of so cowardly a nature I durst not keep company with it.'

Long before this time princes were in the habit of making presents of wild animals. In 1235 the Emperor Frederick gave three leopards to our own King Henry the Third. In 1252 Henry received a white bear from Norway, and two years later the King of France sent him an elephant. It was in this way, I think, that menageries were first formed in England, for the people who received these strange presents had to provide places for them and to make arrangements for their care and feeding.

This custom of making presents of wild or curious animals was continued for a long time. Our sovereigns sometimes receive such gifts even now from the princes of India or other remote countries. If these animals are dangerous, they can be safely lodged in the Zoological Gardens; and, if they are pretty and harmless, they can be placed in some quiet part of one of the royal parks.

John Evelyn, the diarist, tells us of a visit which he made to St. James's Park in 1665, where he saw many animals which were strange to him; among them many kinds of deer, foreign goats and sheep, curious cranes and water-fowl, and a pelican. In 1758 the Duke of Cambridge received a great number of quadrupeds and fowls from the West Indies, and these were probably added to those in the Park.

A foreigner who visited England in 1844 gives a rather amusing instance of the Englishman's interest in strange animals. He attended a sort of garden party at Chiswick House, which was occupied at that time by the Duke of Devonshire. As the foreigner strolled about in the grounds he was surprised to see three giraffes walking among the trees on the other side of a stream. One of them, a very handsome young animal, suddenly took it into its head to come across the water and join the visitors. His intrusion was a little disconcerting, and the ladies and gentlemen did their best to keep out of his way, without appearing to be alarmed. In a little while the giraffe's keepers came across the water in a boat and took him back to the other side. The foreigner thought it rather strange that giraffes should be seen in an English park, but he was afterwards told that the Duke had hired them for the day from a showman to give novelty to the entertainment.

The same writer tells us that a number of owls were kept in a tower at Arundel Castle. There was an old saying that some misfortune would happen if there were no owls in the castle, and to make quite sure that this mischance should not occur, several owls were kept in an old tower, a net being stretched over it to prevent their escape. They were fed as if they were in a proper menagerie, and from time to time renewed. It is said that the birds were named after various prominent men. This collection of owls is now done away with. Shortly before this foreigner returned home, he spent a night at Taymouth Castle, the Marquis of Breadalbane's seat in Perthshire, where he saw bisons grazing in the Park.

They had been brought from the American prairies to adorn the estate.

The white bear which Henry III. received from Norway was sometimes allowed to swim and fish in the Thames, his escape being prevented by a stout cord. About a hundred years ago there was a polar bear in Whitby. It belonged to a ropemaker who had his workshop at the side of the harbour, and it was now and then permitted to swim in the sea.

Bears have always been fairly easy to obtain and to keep in confinement, and bear-pits were formerly more numerous than they are now. I remember several places where bears used to be kept in pits or cages which have long since been destroyed. Two of the bears were particularly interesting to me, because they had been brought over from Russia by some of my relatives.

Before well-ordered zoological collections or travelling menageries came into existence, wild animals were often exhibited in public-houses or inn-yards, the owners of the animals carrying or leading them from town to town, and showing them in this way. Thus, in the time of Queen Anne, leopards, dromedaries, tigers, porcupines, mandrils, pecarries, lions, panthers, jackals, and other animals were shown in various inns in London.

There must sometimes have been a good deal of danger of these animals breaking loose, as they cannot always have been properly housed. Evelyn tells us that he went to see two live Virginian rattlesnakes at Dr. Joyliffe's house in 1657. These rattlesnakes were over a yard in length, and in the middle nearly as thick as a man's leg. Their fangs had not been extracted, and though the snakes were not perhaps so vigorous as they might have been in their native haunts, they were quite dangerous. Yet, says the diarist, they were 'kept only in a barrell of bran.' Few people would have cared to change places with Dr. Joyliffe when he had to coax his charges out of their resting-place, or get them back again.

Charles Waterton, the naturalist, in his *Essays on Natural History*, relates an incident which is as difficult to believe as his famous ride upon the back of a cayman. An American blacksmith, named Vangordon, brought thirty or more rattlesnakes to England in a box and exhibited them in various towns. Waterton, wishing to test their poison and compare it with the arrow poison made by the Indians of Guiana, arranged for a meeting with Vangordon at a doctor's house in Leeds. Vangordon's snake-box was not very convenient, and Waterton provided a glass case, which had been made for an ant-bear. The difficulty of transferring the snakes from the box to the case was got over by Waterton volunteering to take up the reptiles one by one, if the company would remain perfectly still. He was as good as his word, and safely transferred twenty-eight poisonous snakes by hand from the box to the case.

W. A. Atkinson.

THE EFFENDI'S TREASURE.

SPLASH! A little brown baby clove the muddy waters suddenly. Cries of alarm arose on every side, but with a cheery 'All right! I'll get him,' one of two English lads standing together on a little Nile steamer jumped in to the rescue. In a second or two, while the native crowd watched breathlessly, he came up again triumphant, the brown baby in his arms. Eager hands pulled him aboard, and his father caught his shoulder. 'Good heavens! don't you know there are crocodiles in the river?' he said.

'Lucky for me they were all asleep, then,' answered the boy, bending over the rail to place the rescued child in the arms held up for it.

'A thousand thanks, Effendi! Yussif will never forget,' two grateful, dark eyes looked up at him, 'and may Allah ever protect you!'

Julian smiled back, then went below to change, noting a silent ripple made apparently by a piece of wood gliding past the porthole. 'Ugly brutes,' he muttered, with a shudder, 'but I couldn't let them eat that little brown beggar.'

That evening Mr. Carlton had to go ashore on business, not expecting to return until the next day. 'But you'll be all right, boys,' he said to them. 'I've heard there's a party of robbers about, but I don't suppose they'll trouble you.'

'Of course not, Dad. If they do, we'll soon settle them,' laughed Julian, and he left them with a smile.

It was late when the boys turned in, and they were very sound asleep, when Julian awoke with a start, hearing something or some one moving in the cabin. He put out his hand to touch his brother, thinking it might be he, but Lionel's hand met his with a warning grip. Julian fumbled for his electric torch, and a bright gleam shot across the cabin. Then they saw they had made a mistake in betraying their presence, for there were four or five swarthy Arabs present. However, it was best to put a bold face on it, and Julian leapt to his feet with the swift demand: 'What are you doing here?'

In an instant they were on him, and in a very short time both boys were bound, and given to understand that if they uttered a word their shrift would be short.

Then the ransacking of the cabin in earnest; nothing of value was discovered, however, but a wooden box full of books, and presently the demand came in broken English, 'Where is your father's treasure?'

'He has none,' answered Lionel.

'Lie not, boy, your father brought a box of treasure from England.'

'We British do not lie, as you know. That is the box.'

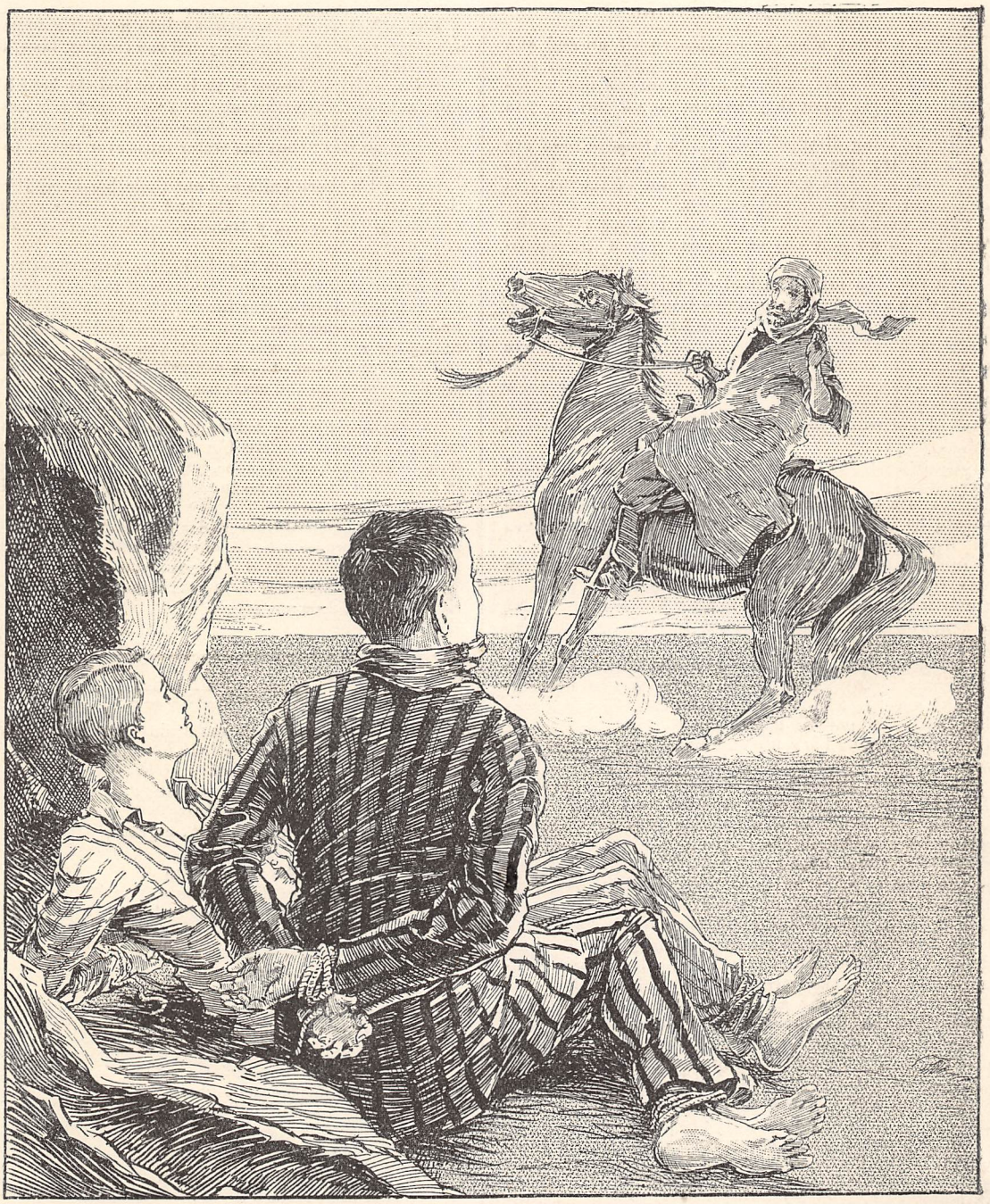
A further search revealing nothing, the robbers had to believe him. A short consultation, then the boys were gagged, and the whole party stole on deck, two Arabs carrying the prisoners. As Julian was lowered into a boat, a pair of strong arms seized and held him for a second, while a voice, scarcely above a whisper, breathed, 'Have no fear, Effendi; Yussif does not forget.'

In vain he tried to see through the darkness who it was that spoke, but it was impossible, and by the time they reached the shore and were mounted, each before a stalwart Arab on horseback, he had come to the conclusion he had been mistaken.

The boys never forgot that ride; it was bitterly cold. Glad, indeed, were they to see the sun rise at last, and to feel its warm beams again on their chilled limbs. With the rising of the sun the robbers reached a well, with a few palm-trees, and called a halt; the captives were tossed on to the sand, while a camp was made and a fire lighted. When this was done, an Arab came across to them, and freed their mouths and hands.

(*Concluded on page* 410.)

"In a very short time both boys were bound."



"Yussif drew rein beside them."

THE EFFENDI'S TREASURE.

(*Concluded from page* 407.)

IT was a great relief to be able to sit up and rub their cramped limbs, and the question Julian had been longing to ask came tumbling off his tongue instantly, 'What have they carried us off for, do you suppose, Li?'

'Maybe being disappointed of the treasure they are going to try for ransom. They evidently thought they were going to get a big haul out of the wooden box,' answered Lionel, and laughed.

'They were sold,' observed Julian, rubbing his knees; 'but I wish we were out of this—they're a villainous-looking lot.'

Just then the man who had untied them came over again with a bowl of water and a hunk of barley-bread. Julian stared hard at him, but the Arab only said: 'The water of Allah is good to the thirsty, though there are crocodiles in the river,' as he handed him the bowl.

'True, son of the Nile; yet the space between their jaws is wide,' answered Julian, promptly, and the man showed his white teeth in a quick smile as he turned away.

'Know him, Li? That's the chap whose kid I pulled out of the river.'

'That's a good thing; for honestly, Ju, I think we should be in a bit of a hole else. They may stick us yet if they can't get the ransom.'

In spite of the knowledge that one of their captors was friendly, the boys could not help feeling anxious, partly for their own sakes and partly because they could guess what their father would be feeling when he returned and found them gone.

About sundown the sentry gave the alarm, a horseman was approaching. Then there was excitement indeed among the robbers. Evidently the news was bad and the pursuit close, for the man frequently pointed back over his route and many glances were cast at the boys.

'Looks as if Father is hustling them a bit,' observed Lionel; 'probably he would not wait for terms.'

In a very short time a decision was reached; the whole band mounted, snatched up the prisoners, and away they swept over the sand. The boys felt their hearts sink in spite of their determination to put a brave face on things, as every hoof-beat took them deeper into the desert and further from their friends.

At last the band halted; the prisoners were dumped down on the sand and left alone in the velvet darkness, listening to the retreating thud of horses' hoofs.

If the first ride was a never-to-be-forgotten memory, that night in the desert was a nightmare! They wriggled the gags from their mouths so that they could talk, and huddled close to each other for warmth, but they could not get their limbs free, try as they would, and the darkness seemed as if it would never lift.

Dawn came at last, but when the silver mist had cleared away the prospect had not improved much, for on every side stretched the desert, unbroken save by the rock under which they lay.

'This is a clincher,' said Julian, straining his eyes for any sign of life in that expanse. 'I can't think Yussif would leave us quite like this.' He had said that more than a dozen times already, and Lionel did not answer, For his part he saw no way out of their present fix. He did not trust the Arab, and thought his brother was most likely mistaken.

But at last Julian, struggling into a sitting posture, sang out, joyfully: 'There's some one coming, Li—there really is!'

He was right. Never in their lives had the boys been so glad to see a swarthy face, as Yussif drew rein beside them and sprang down. 'The night has been long, Effendi,' he said; 'but the water must ever return to its parent, the river.'

He drew a sharp knife and cut their bonds, and gave them food and drink. He had also brought some clothes, which speedily transformed them into a couple of young Arabs.

'Now,' he said, when they had eaten, 'will the lives of Yussif's friends be safe in the hands of the Effendi?'

'Yes,' said Julian, ever the most ready to speak; 'I'll undertake no questions shall be asked, and we shall not remember much—it was so dark, you see.'

The Arab smiled. 'It is well, then; we will start, for we have far to go and must travel slowly, as there is but one horse.'

It was night again before they reached the camp of friendly Arabs whom Mr. Carlton had got to accompany him on his hunt for his sons, and Yussif paused with it in sight. 'I must go no further,' he said; 'I should be known. Farewell!'

'One moment.' Julian laid a detaining hand on his arm. 'Is there nothing in our power to give in return for this? You're a good old sport, you know.'

'Nay, Effendi; your part was done that day in the river—Yussif does not forget.'

MAY HEWARD.

IN THE NIGHT!

WHEN you're tucked up in your bed,
With clothes pulled up round your head
Because it's night—dark night—
Then the sounds begin, you know,
Rustling, flitting, to and fro
Through the night—dark night!

And, outside, the garden-gate
Rattles, because it's very late,
And it's night—dark night!
And the trees begin to cry,
Whisper too, so miserably
In the night—dark night!

And all round the strange sounds go;
Up and down the stairs, you know,
In the night—dark night!
Tramping softly round the bed;
Tapping sometimes overhead;
Through the night—dark night!

Well, just hold your fingers stiff,
And pretend you don't mind if
It *is* night—dark night!
If you really persevere,
That will put things right—no fear!
For you'll sleep—sleep tight!

ETHEL TALBOT.

THE GHOST WOLF.

'SO you're camping the night out in White Wolf Woods, are you, mate? Well, your boss is a good plucked 'un!'

The pedlar leaned against the door-post and squinted at the young ranchman with sly-looking, green eyes. The boy laughed as he fingered his long rifle.

'I guess we aren't much scared of wolves. My uncle can use his shooting-iron better than most chaps hereabouts.'

'He might be the crack shot in all Canada and the States flung in, but that won't help him against the Ghost Wolf, if he should be about.'

'What's he?'

'Not heard of the Ghost Wolf, mate? It's easy to see you've come from far. He's near as big as a moose, and he gets over the ground faster than a race-horse. He's white all over except his eyes—they're red, like coals. And you can see right through him—and all the bones on his skeleton in his inside!'

The boy listened to this description with an air of growing discomfort. 'Doesn't he—doesn't he mind being shot?'

'Shot? Don't you try shooting with the Ghost Wolf! You couldn't do a worse thing. Let him alone, and perhaps he may let you alone. Let fly a bullet at him and—well, it's all up. You can take my word, as have lived in these parts since I was younger than yourself. If you want to sleep a night in White Wolf Wood and be alive next morning, take the bullets out of your guns and set beside your camp fire with your feet crossed.'

'My uncle never carries his gun unloaded.'

'Then you unload it for him, mate, if you value his life. Don't you tell him a word of what I've told you—the Ghost Wolf allers knows if there's two people expectin' him, and he's bound to come after 'em—one, he doesn't heed about.'

To any person of ordinary education the pedlar's story would have sounded absurd enough, but to an ignorant boy of fifteen, brought up amid all sorts of weird legends and superstitions, the ghostly peril seemed far more alarming than any number of real wolves would have been, and the precautions the pedlar suggested sounded like wise advice.

'I guess I will do it if I get a chance.'

A tall, bearded man strode through the inner doorway as he spoke, and laid a hand on the boy's arm.

'Come, Bob, we must be moving. So long, mate.' He nodded shortly to the pedlar, and walked away towards the forest with a long, swinging stride. The boy hurried after him.

'I hope you had a care of your tongue, Bob; you did not let fall a word of our dollars to that dirty fellow yonder?'

'Oh no, Uncle,' replied the boy, hastily.

The two trudged on in silence; the farmer turning over in his mind different schemes for investing his hard-earned money, his nephew thinking uneasily of the pedlar's account of the Ghost Wolf and wondering if he should ever have the audacity to unload his uncle's beloved rifle.

No opportunity came till they were well in the thick of White Wolf Wood. It was here that they were to camp for the night, and while the elder ranchman coaxed the fire alight, Bob slid back the breech with hasty, trembling fingers, and slipped the cartridge into his pocket, where the load from his own gun was already hidden.

A slow hour passed by, while the elder man smoked and counted over his dollars, and Bob made desperate efforts to stir the gallipot on the fire without uncrossing his feet. The sudden loud howl of a wolf, apparently not many yards away, brought the ranchman on to his legs in a moment, his rifle ready cocked in his hands, his eyes peering into the dark undergrowth. From long habit the boy rose also, but his knees shook under him, and he glanced fearfully from side to side, expecting every moment that the spectral white wolf would leap out upon them. Another howl, more weird and dismal than the last, seemed to freeze the blood in his veins. The bushes crackled beneath a heavy, un-wolf-like tread, and into the clearing stepped—the pedlar!

Bob had no time for even a gasp of relief; he saw the revolver in the man's hand pointed at his uncle, and in an instant he realised the trick that had been played him. The ranchman pulled his own trigger, aiming at the pedlar's legs, but both barrels failed in succession, and he found himself helpless.

'Hands up!' said the pedlar with a villainous leer. 'Copped this time, mate, and no error.'

With the revolver pressed against the ranchman's forehead he forced him back against a tree-trunk and slid a grimy hand into his pocket. Neither of them noticed Bob; his useless gun, which he had dropped on the ground, proclaimed the helplessness of his position at the outset.

The pedlar never took his eyes off the ranchman's, or shifted his revolver a hair's breadth; but he felt every note and every piece of gold as he passed it from its owner's pocket to his own. Half a minute crawled by in an oppressive silence, broken only by the crackling of the bushes and the heavy breathing of the two men. Then from exactly behind the pedlar came again the howl of a wolf, this time followed by the snapping of twigs as a large body forced its way through them, and a hungry wolfish snarl.

'O-oh! look at his red eyes—and the bones on his skeleton!' came in a terrified shriek from Bob.

It was too much for the pedlar. The old legend of the haunted wood, which he had enlarged and embroidered for his own ends, flew instantly into his mind, and a bad conscience made a coward of him. He dropped his revolver-hand and turned instinctively to peer into the dark undergrowth behind him. That instant was enough for the ranchman. His heavy fist shot out with force enough to fell an ox, and the pedlar measured his length on the grass. Then Bob scrambled rather shame-facedly out of the bushes and helped to bind the ruffian's wrists and ankles.

'Gee! That was a shave!' puffed the ranchman, rising from his knees. 'You will lie there, my man, till we can get you fetched to gaol. And now, Bob, if you have done shamming ghosts, perhaps you'll explain what's amiss with my gun.'

Scarlet with confusion, Bob stammered an explanation of the trap into which he had fallen. His uncle heard him out in silence.

'Well, well,' he remarked at length, 'you're a bit of a fool, Bob—but I guess you can't help it. And there's one thing I will say for you—you can do a better wolf-howl than that dirty rascal.'

D. M. P. S.

"His rifle ready cocked in his hands."